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BULLETIN

OF THE

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

EDITED BY

DR. JEFFERY G. HARRISON

Volume 75

1955

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE

PREFACE

NINE MEETINGS of the Club have been held in 1955. In accordance with the Resolution passed at the Annual General Meeting on the 19th April, 1955, the June meeting was replaced by one in September, and in consequence the sixth number of the *Bulletin* becomes due to be published in September instead of June as formerly.

During the year the Committee agreed to increase the number of free *Bulletins* to contributors to a maximum of fifty and to pay for a reasonable number of black and white blocks. The December issue contained for the first time a four page inset of art paper to enable reproductions of photographs to appear. With this volume we are publishing the Rules of the Club, as amended at the Annual General Meeting of 19th April, 1955, embodying these and other changes.

It is satisfying that support for the *Bulletin* has continued to grow. The present volume with 130 pages is 18 pages larger than the previous one and the papers have covered a wide variety of subjects from all over the world. Papers are taken as nearly as possible in the order in which they are received, but priority is given to papers read at the meetings, in order to comply with the Rules of the Club that an abstract of the proceedings of the Club shall be printed as soon as possible after each meeting. Also, the difficulties of producing a full 12 or 16 page number demand some latutide for the Editor. There is now a short waiting list for publication, but this has enabled every author to receive proofs, which has not always been possible previously.

Short summaries of the articles in the *Bulletin* now appear in the American publication *Biological Abstracts* and it is hoped that this will further increase the demand for the *Bulletin*.

The numbers attending the meetings for the year were as follows:— Members of the Club, 264; Members of the B.O.U., 40; Guests, 116; Guests of the Club, 3; Total, 423. The Guests of the Club were Professor and Mrs. G. Swanson and Professor M. F. M. Meiklejohn.

Once again Mr. C. N. Walter has kindly prepared the List of Authors for the Volume and has been a constant help to the Editor, who would also like to thank Mr. N. J. P. Wadley and Dr. James M. Harrison for their assistance with this Volume. The Caxton and Holmesdale Press (Sevenoaks) has spared no efforts on our behalf and their willingness has smoothed away many production difficulties.

JEFFERY HARRISON.

Sevenoaks, December 1955.

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BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

(Founded 5 October, 1892)

TITLE AND OBJECTS

The objects of the Club, which shall be called the "British Ornithologists' Club", are the promotion of scientific discussion between Members of the British Ornithologists' Union and others interested in ornithology, and to facilitate the publication of scientific information connected with ornithology.

RULES

(As amended, 19 April, 1955)

MANAGEMENT

(1) The affairs of the Club shall be managed by a Committee, to consist of a Chairman to be elected for three years, and who shall at the end of that period not be eligible for re-election for the next term; one Vice-Chairman, who shall serve for three years and who shall at the end of that period not be eligible for re-election for the next term; an Editor of the *Bulletin* to be elected for five years, and who shall at the end of that period not be eligible for re-election for the next term; a Secretary and a Treasurer who shall be elected for a term of one year, but who shall be eligible for re-election at the next term. There shall be, in addition, four other Members, the senior of whom shall retire each year, the vacancy being filled by the election of another Member. Officers and Members of the Committee shall be elected by the Members of the Club at an Annual General Meeting, and the names of such Officers and Members of the Committee nominated by the Committee for the ensuing year shall be circulated with the notice convening the Annual General Meeting at least two weeks before the Meeting. Should any Member wish to propose another candidate, the nomination of such, signed by at least two Members, must reach the Secretary at least one clear week before the Annual General Meeting.

(2) Any Member desiring to make a complaint of the manner in which the affairs of the Club are conducted must communicate in writing with the Chairman, who will, if it is considered necessary, call a Committee Meeting to deal with the matter.

(3) If the conduct of any Member or Associate-Member, hereinafter together described as Members, shall be deemed by the Committee to be prejudicial to the interests of the Club, that Member may be requested by the Committee to withdraw from the Club. In the case of a refusal, the Member's name may be removed from the list of Members at an Annual General Meeting, provided that, in the notice calling the meeting, intimation of the proposed resolution to remove the Member's name shall have been given to that Member, and a majority of the Members present shall record their votes for such removal.

Subscriptions

(4) Any Member of the British Ornithologists' Union may become a Member of the Club on payment to the Treasurer of an entrance fee of One Pound and a subscription of One Guinea for the current year. Those who are not Members of the British Ornithologists' Union may be admitted to the Club and shall be known as Associate Members. Applications for Associate Membership must be supported in writing by two Members (not being Associate Members), one on personal knowledge, and Associate Members shall be elected by the Committee. The conditions of Associate Membership as to entrance fee, subscription, and otherwise, shall be the same as for Members, save that Associate Members shall not be entitled to vote at any General Meeting or other meetings of the Club attended by them, nor be entitled to serve on the Committee, nor receive gratis a copy of the *Bulletin* of the Club. On signifying their desire, however, to the Editor they will be provided with one copy of the *Bulletin* reporting the proceedings of any Meeting at which they are present, at a price not exceeding 2*s*. 6*d*., as the Committee shall from time to time determine. A Member who ceases to be a Member of the British Ornithologists' Union shall also cease to be a full Member of the Club.

Any Member who has resigned less than five years previously may be reinstated without payment of another Entrance Fee at the the Committee's discretion.

Temporary Associates

(5) Members of the British Ornithologists' Union who are ordinarily resident outside the British Isles, and ornithologisits from the British Empire overseas or from foreign countries, may be admitted at the discretion of the Committee, as Temporary Associates of the Club for the duration of any visit to the British Isles not exceeding the current year. An entrance fee of five shillings shall be payable in respect of every such admission if the period exceeds three months. The privileges of Temporary Associates shall be limited to attendance at the ordinary meetings of the Club and the introduction of guests.

Meetings

(6) The Club will meet, as a rule, on the third Tuesday in the months of January to May inclusive and September to December inclusive, at such hour and place as may be arranged by the Committee. At these Meetings papers upon ornithological subjects will be read, specimens exhibited and described, and discussion invited.

(7) The Annual General Meeting of the Club shall be held on the day of the April Meeting of each year, and the Treasurer shall present thereat the Balance Sheet and Report; and the election of Officers and Committee, in so far as their election is required, shall be held at such Meeting.

(8) A Special General Meeting may be called at the instance of the Committee for any purpose which they deem to be of sufficient importance, or at the instance of not fewer than fifteen Members. Notice of not less than two weeks shall be given of every Annual General Meeting and Special General Meeting.

Introduction of Visitors

(9) Members may introduce visitors at any ordinary Meeting of the Club, but the same guest shall not be eligible to attend on more than three occasions during the year. No former Member who has been removed for any cause, and who has not been reinstated, shall be allowed to attend as a guest.

'Bulletin' of the Club

(10) An Abstract of the proceedings of the Club shall be printed as soon as possible after each Meeting under the title of the *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club*, and one copy shall be distributed gratis to every Member who has paid the current annual subscription.

Contributors are entitled to a maximum of fifty free copies of the *Bulletin* and if they desire to exercise this privilege they should give notice to the Editor when their manuscript is handed in. Copies in excess of the fifty free copies can be ordered at the same time. These will be supplied by the publishers to whom payment at current rates shall be made on demand.

Descriptions of new birds may be published in the *Bulletin* when such cannot be communicated at the Meeting of the Club. This shall be done at the discretion of the Editor.

(11) No communication, the whole or any important part of which has already been published elsewhere, shall be eligible for publication in the *Bulletin*, except at the discretion of the Editor; and no communication made to the Club may be subsequently published elsewhere without the written sanction of the Editor.

Alteration and Repeal of Rules

(12) Any suggested alteration or repeal of a standing rule shall be submitted to Members to be voted upon at the Annual General Meeting, or a Special General Meeting, convened for that purpose.

LIST OF MEMBERS

DECEMBER, 1955

As for 1954, amended as follows:

Resigned or died during 1955:

Miss B. E. BROWN, A. EZRA, Major H. M. HEYDER, Dr. D. L. LACK, R. LIVERSIDGE, W. RYDZEWSKI.

New members in 1955:

ALLOUSE, B. E., B.P.M.O., Director, Iraq Natural History Museum, Baghdad, Iraq.

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Edited by
DR. JEFFERY HARRISON

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BULLETIN

OF THE

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

Volume 75

Number 1

Published : 13th January, 1955

The five hundred and thirty-fifth meeting was held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, on Tuesday, 14th December, 1954, following a dinner at 6.30 p.m.

Chairman : COLONEL R. MEINERTZHAGEN.

Members present, 33 ; Guests 8 ; Guest of the Club, Dr. A. J. Marshall ; Total 42.

Dr. A. J. Marshall gave a most interesting talk on the Physiology of Bird Behaviour.

He dealt mainly with the hormonal and central nervous control of behaviour and discussed the effect of rain on breeding in areas normally subjected to drought. He was of the opinion that increase of light may not be such an important factor in bringing birds into breeding condition as has been thought, and that food, heat or rain may also play a part.

Geographical Variation in the Fairy Flycatcher *Stenostira scita* (Vieillot) of South Africa

by MR. P. A. CLANCEY

Received 15th November, 1954

The Fairy Flycatcher *Stenostira scita* (Vieillot) is a delicate and diminutive warbler-like flycatcher confined to South Africa. It inhabits the drier parts of the sub-continent, frequenting thorn tangles and bushy places from the arid parts of extreme southern Great Namaqualand and the western Cape Province to the Basutoland highlands and the thornveld savanna country of upper Natal, the Transvaal, and immediately adjacent southern Portugese East Africa. Adequate material for a valid study of geographical variation is not generally available to workers, and to the best of my knowledge no critical appraisal of the various populations has

ever been undertaken, Sclater, "Systema Avium Æthiopicarum," part ii, 1930, p. 428; Roberts, "Birds of South Africa", 1940, p. 287; and Vincent, "Check List of the Birds of South Africa", 1952, p. 69, among recent workers, treating the species binominally. Study of material preserved in South African collections now shows that there is, in fact, demonstrable and taxonomically important geographical variation, the populations to the east of the range being appreciably larger and generally darker than those of the west.

The distinctive avian species was described originally as *Muscicapa scita* by Vieillot on the basis of information and figures given by the early naturalist-traveller, Francois Levaillant, in his "Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux d'Afrique", vol. iv, 1805, p. 14, pl. 154. Levaillant first encountered his "Le Gobe Mouches Mignard", or simply "Le Mignard", in the region of the lower Orange River in the north-western Cape Province of South Africa, which general area must be accepted as the type-locality of the bird which we now know as *Stenostira scita*. Of the populations resident in the western and north-western parts of the Cape, material which has been examined from Goodhouse (on the Orange River), Calvinia and Klaver can be taken for all practical purposes as topotypical. Birds of these western populations have wings 47–50 mm., and are generally olivaceous or slate grey on the dorsal and pectoral surfaces. It should be noted that there is much variation in the intensity of shade of grey, and a measure of this is certainly sexual, males being generally darker than females. Birds agreeing in all essential details with those of the topotypical populations have been examined from a variety of places in the Cape Province and parts of the Orange Free State—Tarkastad, Aliwal North, Barkly West and Bloemfontein being precise localities.

To the east of the populations just discussed, one finds birds significantly larger and generally darker and more bluish on the upper-parts and breast, particularly in the males. Specimens exhibiting such characters have been examined from Basutoland (Maluti Mountains; Mamathes), Orange Free State (Heuningspruit Station), Transvaal (Bloemhof, Pretoria, Nylstroom, Waterberg district, Klaserie, etc.), Natal (Colenso, Ladysmith), and southern Portuguese East Africa (Umbelúzi River, near Lourenço Marques). The wings of 14 specimens of this group of populations range from 50–55 mm., and show a difference in size when compared with western birds which is statistically significant.

As there is a considerable measure of individual variation in colour, any projected discrimination of eastern and western sub-species of *S. scita* must be based almost exclusively on mensural characters. Using the formula given by Mayr, Linsley and Usinger in their indispensable "Methods and Principles of Systematic Zoology", 1953, p. 146, it is found that a series of 9 specimens of the western populations of *S. scita* with wings 47–50 mm. (mean 49.3 mm. S.D. 1.005) when compared against one of 14 specimens of the eastern populations with wings 47–50 mm. (mean 52.6 mm. S.D. 1.496) gives a C.D. (coefficient of difference) value of 1.32, which is above the level of conventional sub-specific difference (joint non-overlap, per cent = 91). Resulting from this critical test, it would seem advisable to distinguish two sub-species of *S. scita*, the characters, ranges and nomenclature of which can be defined as follows:

1. *Stenostira scita scita (Vieillot)*

Muscicapa scita Vieillot, "Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle", nouvelle edition, vol. xxi, 1818, p. 474: Lower Orange River, north-western Cape Province, South Africa. *Ex* Levaillant.

Adult Male: Upper-parts slate or olivaceous grey; supercilia white; lores, areas under eyes and ear-coverts jet black; throat dull white with suffusion of apricot; breast, sides of the body and flanks grey; abdomen dull white with suffusion of apricot in centre. Wings black with prominent white horizontal stripe. Tail black, first three pairs of rectrices prominently marked with white. Irides, dark brown; bill, legs and toes, black.

Adult female: Similar to adult male, but usually paler above.

Measurements: Wings (flattened) 47–50 (49.3), tails 49–55 mm. (Nine specimens measured).

Range: Widely but locally distributed throughout most of the drier areas of the Cape Province and in contiguous districts of southern Great Namaqualand, and also in parts of the western Orange Free State.

2. *Stenostira scita rudebecki, subsp. nov.*

Closely similar to *S. s. scita* as defined above, but usually darker and more bluish grey dorsally and on the breast. Larger in size.

Measurements: Wings (flattened) 50-55 (52.6), tails 51.5–57 mm. (Fourteen specimens measured.)

Type: ♂, adult. Collected on the banks of the Umbelúzi River, near Lourenço Marques, southern Portuguese East Africa, by F. O. Noomè, 18th May, 1911. In the collection of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria.

Range: The highlands of Basutoland and adjacent areas of the Orange Free State, upper Natal, the Transvaal and contiguous districts of southern Portuguese East Africa.

Note: Named for Dr. G. Rudebeck, Ornithologist of the Transvaal Museum, in recognition of the many services which he has rendered me in furtherance of recent systematic studies.

A New Lark from British Somaliland

by Mr. C. M. N. White

Received 1st December, 1954

Calandrella rufescens vulpecula subsp. nov.

Description: differs from *C. r. somalica* (Sharpe), *C. r. athensis* (Sharpe) and *C. r. megaensis* (Benson), with which it has been compared in having the feather edges of the upper side foxy rufous, especially so on the head top; the dark feather centres are rather dull as in *C. r. somalica* and not so black as in *C. r. athensis* and *C. r. megaensis*; the whole under side ground colour washed with pale vinous pink and not white as in the other races, the ground colour of the breast more strongly and more rufuos tinged; the white of the outer tail feather tinged with pinkish.

Distribution: only known from the red soils of the Haud about Bohotleh in southern British Somaliland and one specimen from similar country 40 miles south east of Burao.

Type: in British Museum (Nat. Hist.) male adult collected 10 miles west of Bohotleh, British Somaliland, at 2300 feet by J. G. Williams. The type locality is 8° 12′ N., 46° 10′ E.

Measurements of type: wing, 89 mm.; tail, 52 mm.; bill from skull, 15 mm. British Museum Register Number: 1954.56.1.

Remarks: Mr. Williams collected a series of this lark which is in very fresh plumage and certainly not soil stained. I am much indebted to him for allowing me to study specimens of it and to describe it. He reports that its behaviour contrasted strongly with that of *C. r. somalica*; the latter was tame and in flocks, whereas the new race was extremely wild and not in flocks. The striking appearance tempted me to think it might be a new species, but I can find no structural characters to support this view.

A series measured by Mr. Williams gives in 4 males and 4 females, the following data:

	male	*female*
wing	88–92 mm.	86–87 mm.
tail	51–54 mm.	48–52 mm.
exposed culmen ..	11.5–2.5 mm.	11.5–12 mm.
tarsus	19.5–20 mm.	19.5–20 mm.

Two other females now in my collection agree with these measurements.

My thanks are also due to Mr. J. D. Macdonald who most generously made available a specimen of *C. r. megaensis*.

On some Unusual Plumage Aberrations in the Great Tit, *Parus major* Linnaeus

by Mr. Bryan L. Sage

Received 15th November, 1954

Examples of this species showing aberrations in the colouration of the plumage, are to judge from the paucity of published records, few and far between. Three very interesting cases have been placed on record in recent years. In the *Ibis* 1937: 603, Dr. James M. Harrison and P. Pateff have described in some detail an erythristic female *Parus major mallorcae* von Jordans taken on the island of Samothraki, Greece, on 19th May, 1935. P. A. Clancey (*Bulletin B.O.C.* 63: 6) has described a partially melanistic female *Parus major newtoni* Prazak, taken near Carmunnock, Lanarkshire, on 16th October, 1942; the same author (*Bulletin B.O.C.* 64: 41–42) has also placed on record a specimen of *P. major mallorcae* in which the yellow of the ventral surfaces is replaced by a dull cream with a few naturally pigmented feathers on the upper pectoral regions, the green of the mantle is obscured by a dense cinereous wash, remainder of the plumage normal. This bird, an adult male, was taken in the province of Apulia, Italy, on 27th December, 1943. Apparently none of the above authors were aware of the five older records which are listed below. Most of these records are probably referable to the Birtish Race *Parus major newtoni* Přázák, but as three of them are winter records which may just possibly be referable to the typical race, it is not possible to be certain of the exact racial identity:

(i) a completely pure cream-coloured bird was shot at Wilmington, Yorks, on 24th November, 1851 (*Zoologist*, 1852: 3330).

(ii) an albino seen at Falkirk, Stirling, on 29th July, 1867 (*Zoologist*, 1867: 913).

(iii) a bird obtained in the New Forest, Hampshire, in 1869, was quite white with the exception of those parts of the plumage which are normally yellow and green, which in this case were a pale lemon-yellow, the bill was pale yellowish-flesh (*Zoologist*, 1869: 1847).

(iv) a bird shot near Nottingham in November, 1889, had the head and throat bronzy-brown instead of black, breast pale yellow, primaries cream, shoulders grey and the tail sandy (*Zoologist*, 1890: 107).

(v) an albinistic bird shot near Tetbury, Gloucestershire, on 6th February, 1908, was pure white except for the yellow parts of the plumage, which were normal (*Zoologist*, 1908: 113).

In the course of compiling an extensive card index of plumage aberrations, I have encountered no other records referring to this species, and I therefore thought it desirable to rescue the above records from the mists of obscurity into which they had sunk.

On the type locality of Mirafra alopex Sharpe, Cat. Bds. Brit. Mus. 13, p. 617, 1890: Somaliland

by Captain C. H. B. Grant and Mr. C. W. Mackworth-Praed

Received 8th November, 1954

The type is in the British Museum, Brit. Mus. Reg. No. 1889.9.13.169, and was originally considered to be a specimen of *Mirafra cordofanica* by Shelley, and the only locality on the label is Somali. This specimen is given in *The Ibis*, p. 407, 1885, under 39, *Mirafra cordofanica* (?) and is the only Lark recorded. Lort Phillips remarks "met on a few occasions near the centre of the plateau".

The route taken by Lort Phillips and his party in 1884 is shown on the map by F. L. James in the Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc. 7, No. 10, 1885, and the party travelled out by the eastern route and returned by the western route, roughly following long. 45° E., as far south as the head waters of the Webi Shebeli.

It would appear that the "centre of the plateau" is approximately long. 45° x lat. 8° and we would suggest that the Haud (approx. long. 45° x lat. 8°), eastern Abyssinia, be accepted as the type locality of *Mirafra alopex* Sharpe, as there is no evidence as to the exact place from which the type was collected.

On the status of Buceros *nasutus* var. caffer (vel. si mavia, *B. epirhinus* n. sp.), Sundevall, OEv. K. Vet.—Akad. Förh. p. 108, for 1850, 1851

by Captain C. H. B. Grant and Mr. C. W. Mackworth-Praed

Received 8th November, 1954

The majority of authors have used *Tockus nasutus epirhinus*, but White and Winterbottom, Check List, B.N. Rhodesia, p. 59, 1949, gives *Tockus nasutus caffer*. Under *Lophoceros erythrorhynchus* in Bull. 153, U.S. Nat. Mus., p. 413, 1930, Friedmann points out that the words "var. caffer" as

given by Sundevall on p. 108 (op. cit.) under Buceros *erythrorhynchus* "is to be understood as a geographic, not a nomenclatorial" name. Throughout Sundevall's paper he writes the generic names in Roman and the specific names in italics and therefore in this case "*nasutus*" and "*epirhinus*" are unquestionably scientific names, whereas his "var. caffer" in Roman is a vernacular term conveying that the Kaffrarian bird is a different variety and gives this variety (geographical race) the scientific name of *B. epirhinus*. The whole of Sundevall's paper except for the introduction, is written in Latin.

We should accept that *Tockus nasutus epirhinus* is the correct scientific name of the South African race. Roberts, Ann. Trans. Mus. II, p. 219, 1926, has, however, introduced "*caffer*" into nomenclature as a scientific name and therefore *Buceros nasutus caffer* Roberts, 1926, becomes a synonym of *Tockus nasutus epirhinus* (Sundevall).

Occurrence of the Levant Sparrow-Hawk in Tanganyika

by Mr. A. F. Morrison

Received 22nd November, 1954

During a recent re-examination of the hawks in the collection of the King George V Memorial Museum, Dar-es-Salaam, one was found which had been taken by the late O. F. M. Swynnerton at Busenga, Tanganyika. It was unsexed and the name on the label was *Astur tachiro sparsimfasciatus* Reichenow.

On examination, however, it turned out to be, by coloration and wing formula, an immature *Accipiter brevipes* Severzow, in worn plumage. Captain C. H. B. Grant has very kindly examined the skin and confirms the identification. The date on the label is 1st December, 1921, so that this unique record evidently has been buried under a misidentification for over 30 years, and antedates Major Cave's record for the Sudan (Macdonald and Cave, B. B. Oc. lvii, 1937, page 125) by 15 years.

Remarks on
The Taxonomy of the Yellow Bunting, *Emberiza citrinella* Linnaeus

Part II

By Dr. James M. Harrison

Received 12th August, 1954

The distinctive variability of the birds in the south-eastern area of England has already been stressed, the population being accepted there as Gengler's form *E.c. nebulosa*, which I have indicated is in effect a variable, though recognisable, intermediate between *E.c. citrinella* and *E.c. sylvestris*. In the present state of our knowledge it is of course not possible to determine every example of this species resembling *E.c. sylvestris* or the

nominate race taken in the non-breeding season in the British Isles as a genuine immigrant, but numbers of individuals of both forms must surely reach our shores from north and north-western Europe, where, as I have already shown, the *E.c. sylvestris* mutation of *E.c. nebulosa* occurs with some frequency ; proof of this must await positive evidence of the recovery of a ringed bird. However, what can be confidently asserted is that such individuals doubtless arise occasionally from British breeding stock, at least from breeding pairs in the eastern and south-eastern counties of England, while I am of the opinion that the sporadic breeding of birds which have come to us from north-western Europe also occurs, thus of course maintaining a gene-trickle and a continuance of the somewhat unstable and variable characters demonstrable in Gengler's form, *E.c. nebulosa*.

In view of this disclosure of a western and eastern differentiation in the British Isles, the writer had thought that the matter might resolve itself as one where, by a better segregation in the west, the gradual elimination of adventitious genes present in *E.c. nebulosa* might have resulted in a reverse mutation towards *E.c. sylvestris*. This, however, is not the case, for a careful comparison shows that the birds of the north and western half of the British Isles do not match the central European race and lack the greenish wash often present in *E.c. sylvestris;* they are less green on the napes and are altogether a richer and darker brown on the mantles, have heavier mantle striations and richer chestnut-brown rumps.

In 1940, Mr. P. A. Clancey[13] separated the Yellow Bunting of the north of Scotland under the name *Emberiza citrinella caliginosa*, the type being a female obtained at Dornoch, in south-east Sutherlandshire, on 2nd September, 1938. When this form was considered by the List Sub-Committee of the British Ornithologists' Union, it was apparent that dark individuals of the species occurred elsewhere in the British Isles ; in consequence of this, the taxonomic significance of the new form in the cline was not fully appreciated at that time. In the light of the present research, it is apparent that *E.c. caliginosa* must be recognised as valid, but its range extended to include Eire and Wales, with a well-marked intermediate population in the western half of England, roughly west of the line drawn from Flamborough Head to Start Point. The intermediate characters are particularly well seen in series from Lancashire, and it is probable that birds from the Isle of Man are of the same intermediate type. The Scottish, Irish and Welsh populations were no doubt originally phenologically determined and have by now, almost certainly, become genetically fixed.

Although the intensity of the yellow of the underparts has already been indicated as extremely variable throughout the range of the species, it is nevertheless apparent that this character has some racial significance in the differentiation of the populations of the north and west in Scotland and Wales, and in the south-west in central and south-western Europe, in so far as the mainland of the Continent is concerned. The comparative paleness of the undersides of the males in the Lancashire series, which are so extremely well differentiated on the upper sides, is very clearly an indication of their intermediate make-up. However, it is still very evident that it is

[13] *Ibis*, 1940, p. 94. Notes on Some Birds from Scotland.

the central European form which has the brightest yellow of the underparts. Elsewhere in the British Isles, the majority of birds are pale yellow with a small percentage of individuals showing a tendency to a brighter yellow of these parts.

V. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MEASUREMENTS

It is clear from a consideration of the comparative measurements referred to in the present study that there is a cline in size from small-winged birds in the west to rather longer-winged birds in the north and east, while, curiously enough, the population in central Europe, in south-west and southern Europe is also long-winged, constituting in this respect an exception to the Law of Bergmann, in which the existence of the longer-winged populations is correlated with more northerly latitudes.

In general terms, it has been found by experience that the wing-length affords the best index of size ; next in importance is the size of tail, which, however, shows a rather greater overlap in measurement (Fig. I), while the bills and tarsi show surprisingly little variation throughout the distribution of the species. It was, however, noted that the eastern form *E.c. erythrogenys* showed a slight and fairly constant increase in bill-length and in the length of tarsus ; for whereas in the other populations the former was pretty constantly 11 mm., with the tarsi mostly 19 mm., in the eastern race the bills were fairly consistently 12 mm., some even up to 13 mm., and the tarsi mostly 20 mm., and occasionally rather more.

Although the series of breeding males were not numerically equal, there has nevertheless been a sufficiency of all populations to plot the wing-lengths as histograms, and these show a gradual shift in wing-lengths from west to east, from less than about 88 mm. in the west to more than 88mm. in the north and east, the critical point being round about 89 mm. There is of course an appreciable overlap in wing-lengths, as is to be expected in cases of such intergradation.

In dealing with the populations in the British Isles, these have been shown in the figure (Fig. II) as (1) birds from Scotland, Wales and Eire—*E.c. caliginosa* (black squares), with (2) superimposed upon the histogram by the device of outline, white on black and black on white, of birds from the eastern and south-eastern counties of England—*E.c. nebulosa* (*sensu stricto*)—these latter individuals representing Gengler's form in its island distribution. It will be seen that virtually all these breeding birds —a total of 96—fall well behind the 89 mm. line.

On a separate histogram (Fig. III above) I have shown the wing-lengths of 20 *E.c. nebulosa* obtained from the declared Continental distribution of that race, i.e. from northern France, Holland, and some individuals from Denmark, which on general characters largely match specimens from the two former countries. If this histogram is compared with that showing the British populations, a gradual and slight increase in size of wing is suggested, and no doubt in a larger sample this feature would be even more apparent. This finding is consistent with the fact that this form on the Continental mainland is less well differentiated than it is in the eastern and south-eastern counties of England, the wing-length histogram, however, showing a rather smaller average than that for the Scandinavian population, (Fig. III below).

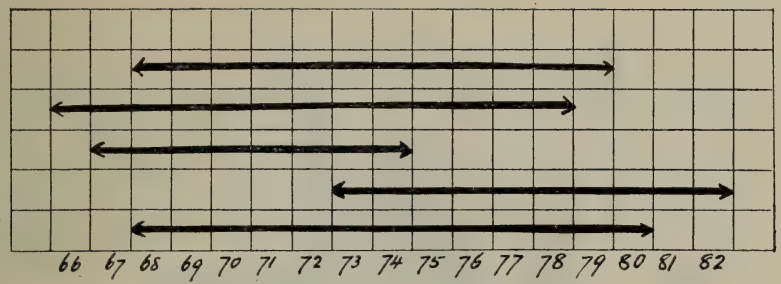

FIG. I.—Tail lengths, breeding males.

1 *E. citrinella citrinella* LINNAEUS—Scandinavia.
2 *E. citrinella nebulosa* GENGLER—S. and S.E. England.
3 *E. citrinella caliginosa* CLANCEY—Scotland, Wales, Eire.
4 *E. citrinella sylvestris* BREHM—Central Germany, Switzerland, Hungary, Italy.
5 *E. citrinella erythrogenys* BREHM—U.S.S.R., Bulgaria, Jugoslavia, Macedonia.

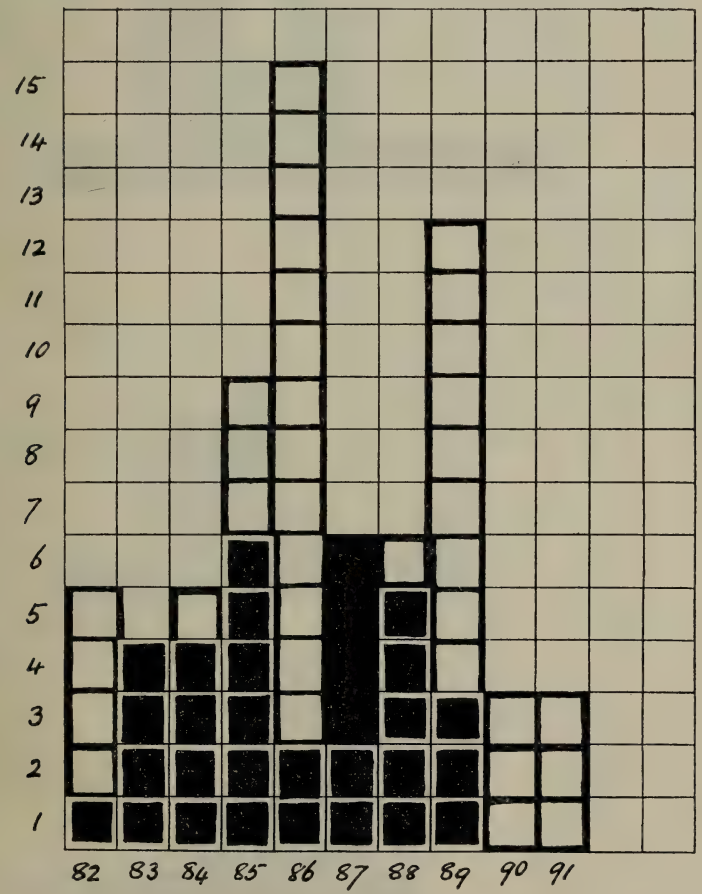

FIG. II.—Wing lengths, breeding males.

31 *E. citrinella caliginosa* CLANCEY—Scotland, Wales, Eire: **Black** squares
65 *E. cirinella nebulosa* GENGLER—Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Kent, Hertfordshire, Wiltshire, Worcestershire, Somerset, Hampshire, Sussex, Surrey: Superimposed outlines **Black** on **White: White** on **Black.**

Wing lengths, breeding males.

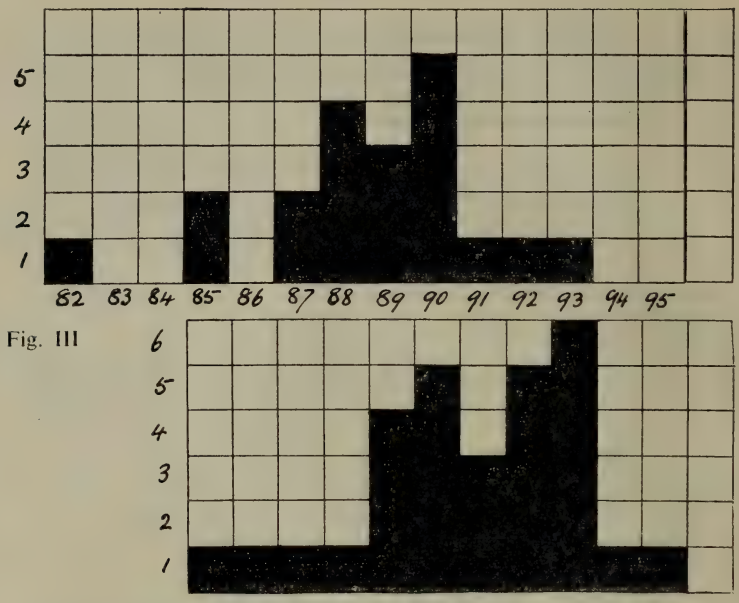

Fig. III

FIG. III—*above*

20 *E. citrinella nebulosa* GENGLER—Northern France, Holland, Denmark.

below

29 *E. citrinella citrinella* LINNAEUS—Scandinavia.

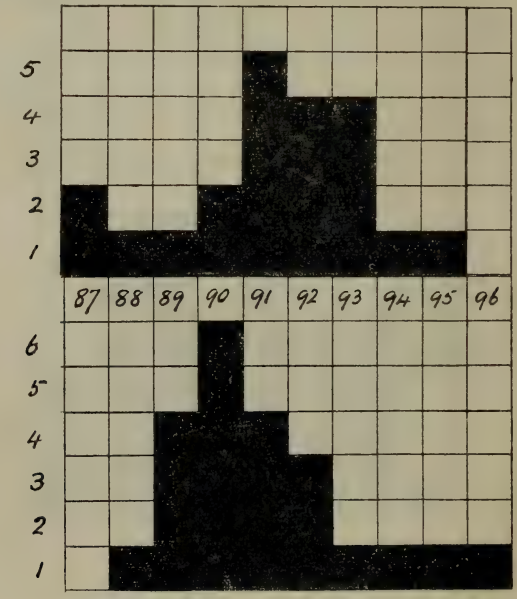

Fig. IV

FIG. IV—*above*

21 *E. citrinella sylvestris* BREHM—Central Germany, Switzerland, Hungary, Italy.

below

22 *E. c. erythrogenys* BREHM—U.S.S.R., Bulgaria, Jugoslavia, Macedonia.

The disclosure of longer winged birds in the south and east (Fig. IV), with a considerably greater admixture of smaller winged individuals elsewhere in the distribution, coupled with a rather high percentage of specimens in the south and east, showing the chestnut moustachial mutation, suggests that the species had its origin in the latter region and that the northern and western populations have been more recently evolved, but of course this must perforce remain conjectural.

VI. INTRODUCED BIRDS

The introduction of the Yellow Bunting into New Zealand, about which there is unfortunately no exact information as to the source from which the birds were obtained, makes a detailed study of the characters of birds taken in the Islands of unusual interest and importance. I have been enabled to examine a small series of both sexes through the kind offices of Mr. C. A. Fleming. The writer believes that it is most unlikely that the original stock were of British breeding birds, but that the birds would have been trapped in the non-breeding season, and may therefore have included a percentage of Continental immigrants.

A study of the characters the specimens presented bears this out. The males examined do not wholly match Gengler's race, *E.c. nebulosa* (*sensu stricto*), i.e. from the eastern and south-eastern counties of England. They diverge from that form in the following respects:—firstly, in the rather small sample investigated, the mantles are variable, both in colour and pattern. In some, this region is rather brownish, but not so dark and uniform and not so heavily striated as in the populations in the extreme western half of England, Wales and in Scotland and Eire, while the mantle striations tend to be somewhat heavier than in birds from the eastern side of England. On the upper parts, the specimens fit best into series of this species from north-western Europe, a point which thoroughly supports the hypothesis that the stock originated from immigrants to the British Isles trapped in the non-breeding season.

Secondly, the most significant feature is that the underparts of all the males examined are of an intensely bright yellow colour, this character exactly matching the central European form *E.c. sylvestris* and also the eastern race *E.c. erythrogenys;* they are, however, different from the latter in being less heavily marked with chestnut striations over the pectoral region and on the flanks: also the outer edges of the secondaries in the New Zealand birds match those of the central European birds.

It would seem that in the New Zealand population, under altered environmental influences and far removed from gene-interchange, we can see the effect of the elimination of the genes which are responsible for the extreme variability of the characters as seen in the populations in north-western Europe. The effect is that by the in-breeding of a stock now isolated and remote, the disclosure and importance of the central European form, *E.c. sylvestris*, as one of the cardinal racial genotypes, has been made evident. These birds, in fact, exemplify the phenomenon of autophoric reverse mutation, and the gradual elimination of heterozygous elements, which in the populations of north-western Europe, are constantly being re-introduced to maintain variability. Upon further consideration, following the examination of the large general series which has been available in

the course of this research, the author is now of the opinion that the New Zealand birds should be regarded as more nearly approaching the central European population, *E.c. sylvestris* Brehm rather than the nominate form *E.c. citrinella* Linnaeus.

The small series of New Zealand birds available does not allow of any useful analysis of measurements, but in the males the wings measure: 85 mm., 88 mm. (2) and 89 mm. which, it will be noted, is small when compared with topotypical *E.c. sylvestris;* an examination of a longer series of this species from New Zealand is very desirable before a more definite assignment is possible as to racial identity. (C/f *Checklist of New Zealand Birds.* 1953, p. 66)

(To be concluded)

Page and Line Priority in Ornithological Nomenclature

By Captain C. H. B. Grant

Received 8th November, 1954

In the "Auk", (p. 203, 1954), Amadon, in discussing the validity of certain names, states that Page Priority "is not allowed as a basis for changing an established name".

An "established name" is surely that valid name first given to a genus, species, or race as from the 1st January, 1758.

Names in different journals under different dates, names in the same journal under different dates, and names in the same journal under the same date are all essentially in the same category. If page and line priority are not considered to have the same priority as different dates, we are creating, therefore, a subterfuge to suit our own personal convenience.

To ignore Page and Line Priority, and so not to adopt the earliest valid name is only another form of "nomina conservanda".

The majority of systematic ornithologists, both past and present, have for many years seen clearly that the only way to attain world-wide uniformity in ornithological nomenclature is to bring into use, as soon as possible, the first valid name of any genus, species, or race after the 1st January, 1758. By this means only can we ensure that in whatsoever language an author writes, the same scientific name will be used for the same bird. This sound policy eliminates all argument, admits of no personal opinion, simplifies nomenclature, and establishes that name which was first given.

It should be realized that it is unsound to ignore or suppress a valid name, either by an individual, or by a body, for any such decision cannot eliminate it.

We cannot be consistent unless we drop these prevarications and place nomenclature on a sound and firm basis, accepting only the 1st January, 1758, as our starting point.

Priority is such a golden rule that I fail to understand why all systematic ornithologists do not agree to this obviously practical procedure.

Special Notice to Contributors

The Committee at its meeting in December, 1954, agreed to increase the number of free Bulletins to contributors up to a maximum of fifty. The number required must be stated on the original manuscript, otherwise none will be sent.

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Back numbers of the "Bulletin" can be obtained at 2/6 each. Applications should be made to R. A. H. Coombes, Esq., Zoological Museum, Tring, Herts. No reply will be sent if parts are not available.

Members who have back numbers of the "Bulletin" which they no longer require, are requested to kindly send them to R. A. H. Coombes, Esq., as above.

DINNERS AND MEETINGS FOR 1955

18th January, 15th February, March Meeting with B.O.U., 19th April, 17th May, 20th September, 18th October, 15th November, 13th December.

SEPARATES

Contributors who desire free copies of the Bulletin containing their notes should state so on their MS., otherwise these will not be ordered. These will be supplied up to a maximum of fifty.

PUBLICATION OF THE "BULLETIN"

Members who make a contribution at a Meeting should hand the MS. to the Editor at that Meeting. As the proofs will be corrected by the Editor, it is essential that the MS. should be correct and either typed or written very clearly with scientific and place names in block letters. The first mention of a scientific name should be spelt out in full, i.e., genus, specific name, racial name (if any), and author. Any further mention of the same name need only have the initial letter of the genus and no further mention of the author.

If no MS. is handed to the Editor at the Meeting, a note will be inserted mentioning the contribution.

ILLUSTRATIONS

The cost of one black and white block per article will be borne by the Club. If the author desires the block for his own personal use afterwards, this may be purchased through the Hon. Treasurer.

Communications are not restricted to members of the British Ornithologists' Club, and contributions up to 1,500 words on taxonomy and related subjects will be considered from all who care to send them to The Editor, Dr. J. G. Harrison, "Merriewood", St. Botolph's Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Communications relating to other matters should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, N. J. P. Wadley, Esq., 14 Elm Place, London, S.W.7.

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PURCHASED

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Edited by
DR. JEFFERY HARRISON

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February
1955

NATURAL HIST

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Volume 75
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The five hundred and thirty-sixth meeting was held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, on Tuesday, 18th January, 1955, following a dinner at 6.30 p.m.

Chairman: COLONEL R. MEINERTZHAGEN

Members present, 32; Guests, 14; Guests of the Club, Professor and Mrs. G. Swanson. Total 48.

Exhibition of a Red-breasted Goose from England

by MR. GEORGE ATKINSON-WILLES

Mr. Atkinson-Willes exhibited the thirteenth example of the Red-breasted Goose, *Branta ruficollis* (Pallas) to have been found in Britain. This bird was an immature and had been shot at Hasfield, 7 miles N.N.E. of Gloucester on December 23rd, 1954. It was a single bird, but White-fronted Geese, *anser albifrons* (Scopoli) were in the vicinity at the same time.

Professor Gustav Swanson, Professor of the Department of Conservation, Cornell University, U.S.A., then gave a talk on Wildfowl Conservation, illustrated by lantern slides and a film. A full account follows.

Wildfowl Conservation in America

by PROFESSOR GUSTAV A. SWANSON

INTRODUCTION.—In America, we do not have nationalised railroads and the health scheme, but we do have nationalised wildfowl, and many of the conservation activities which I shall describe were, I believe, greatly stimulated by this fact, that in America, wildlife is so clearly public property, and a public responsibility. Many of the geographic, historic, political, cultural, demographic and economic differences between North America and Europe significantly affect wildfowl conservation. Consider, for example, that Canada and the United States, including Alaska, comprise an area 3½ times that of all Europe, but have a human population density only an eighth as great; that throughout this vast area one language is understood, and that we have not been divided by wars for

over a century; and that the major nesting, migration, and wintering areas for wildfowl are all in this one land mass.

When I consider these advantages, I realize that our progress in wildfowl conservation has been painfully slow and bumbling, and should give us a sense of humility which many Americans, unfortunately, do not display.

These same differences, which made it relatively easy for us to plan a wildfowl conservation programme for all North America, will make much of what I tell you quite inapplicable here in Britain, but I am assuming that you are interested in our efforts as much for themselves, as for any chance they might be applicable here. For brevity's sake I shall consider chiefly the activities of the United States federal government, but you should understand that many of the individual States and Provinces, as well as the Dominion government in Canada, are doing similar work.

The main concept behind our wildfowl conservation programme in America is that wildfowl constitutes an important recreational and æsthetic resource belonging to all the people. The commercial and food values of wildlife were important in pioneer times, but they conflicted, of course, with the concept that wildlife should provide the greatest enjoyment to the greatest number of people, and had to make way. It is now illegal, therefore, to sell wild game in America.

VALUE.—The value of a recreational and æsthetic resource is difficult to measure, but we do have over two million licensed wildfowl shooters in the United States, who are estimated to spend four hundred million dollars yearly in pursuit of their sport, so the value, however measured, is certainly high.

LEGISLATION.—Our first game law was a close season on deer in Rhode Island in 1646, but it was 200 years later before migratory birds were given their first protection, when the same State prohibited spring shooting of waterfowl. In general the States always gives far greater protection to resident game than to the migratory forms, a natural human reaction which inevitably demanded national and international intervention. The Lacey Act of 1900 helped tremendously to curb market shooting, because it gave federal assistance to the States in enforcing their game laws. The Migratory Bird Convention with Canada, ratified in 1916, was, however, the most important development, and under its terms virtually all important federal wildfowl conservation work has been conducted. It provided that the major responsibility for migratory bird conservation should be federal rather than State; it limited the extent of the shooting season, outlawed spring shooting and the sale of wildfowl.

The Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929 authorised 800,000,000 dollars over a ten year period for a wildlife refuge system in the States, but the economic depression, which immediately followed, prevented three-fourths of this money from becoming available. In 1934, therefore, the Duck Stamp Act was passed to provide funds for refuge purchase and maintenance by a direct tax of one dollar annually on the wildfowl shooter himself. (This was amended in 1949 to two dollars.) It is now traditional with us that the income from the shooting licences required by all the States as well as the federal Duck Stamp, are earmarked for the support of the wildlife conservation programme. One additional source of income for this work resulted from the Pittman-Robinson Act of 1937, which pro-

vided that an eleven per cent. excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition should also be available for wildlife restoration work.

Some other characteristics of American wildlife legislation and practice include the following:

1. A special force of Game Wardens to enforce wildlife laws; (New York State, for example, has over 175 full-time game protectors, and the federal government has about the same number).

2. Shooting regulations which are exceedingly flexible, changed each year to conform with wildfowl abundances and anticipated hunting pressure in that year. (In some years of wildfowl scarcity we have had shooting seasons of 30 days or less.)

3. Completely close seasons on rare species which need strict protection; (in the mid-1930s, for example, the Wood-duck, Bufflehead, and Ruddy Duck were given complete protection for varying periods until they increased in numbers. The Atlantic Brent was completely protected for 11 years from 1933 to permit it to recover from the decline in abundance which followed the disastrous eelgrass disappearance).

4. Various measures designed to distribute the sport among as many shooters as possible by limiting the kill by any one person (Examples: at present, the daily bag limit in most parts of the U.S. per shooter is four ducks; the use of live-ducks as decoys or of distributing feed to lure ducks to the shooter is prohibited; the permissible gun is a shot gun not larger than 10 gauge, holding not more than three shells, and fired from the shoulder).

Refuges.—The increasing number of wildfowl shooters, and decreasing amount of good wildfowl habitat caused by agricultural expansion made it clear that unless a system of refuges was established in the U.S., the population was doomed to steady decline. The refuge system seeks to provide areas strategically located in the principal nesting, migration and wintering areas, where wildfowl have first priority, where they are as safe as posisble from the shooter and their natural enemies, where food and cover are abundant, and where waterlevels are maintained at the most favourable condition for the birds. There are now some 220 federal waterfowl refuges covering about $3\frac{1}{2}$ million acres, or about 1/6 of one per cent. of the area of the U.S. and Alaska. Refuge administrators have estimated that about twice this much area *should* be in refuges, but land values have increased so much during the past 20 years that I do not think this goal is likely to be attained.

Among the points pertaining to refuges which might be of interest are:

1. While refuges provide protection and food for the birds as planned, they usually also provide improved shooting around their peripheries, by holding birds which otherwise would have continued to areas less disturbed.

2. In some cases, as at Horseshoe Lake, Illinois, a refuge which is too small, and where shooting was permitted too close to the water's edge, the area became a death trap instead of providing protection. Refuge size and boundaries must be considered very carefully to achieve the desired protection.

3. In some cases, special refuges have been established for rare or

endangered species of birds. The trumpeter swan, whooping crane, and California condor refuges are examples.

4. The federal policy is to permit uses of the refuge which do not conflict with the waterfowl, so many American waterfowl refuges have some cattle grazing, farming, fishing, trapping of valuable fur animals, and even drilling for oil which sometimes bring in substantial income and help carry the cost of the operation.

5. Financial support of the refuge system is from the refuge income, the sportsman, through his purchase of Duck Stamps, and some additions from general tax sources.

6. On some federal wildfowl refuges, public shooting is permitted on restricted proportions—usually less than 20% of the whole area—but on most there is no shooting permitted.

7. To be most effective the refuges must be managed carefully. Some common management measures include regular patrol to enforce the laws, control of water levels, control of noxious plants and planting or encouragement of useful ones, and acutally raising cultivated foods such as wheat and barley for the birds in some instances.

Private Organizations.—A considerable number of private organizations participate in the wildfowl conservation programme in an important manner, but only a few examples can be cited. The National Wildlife Federation has been exceedingly helpful in securing the passage of constructive legislation. The National Audubon Society conducts a very active educational programme, and operates a number of refuges, of which the most important is the 26,000 acre Raney Sanctuary for geese in Louisiana. Ducks Unlimited has constructed a number of marshes for waterfowl in Canada, and has also done a great deal of waterfowl ringing.

Fact Finding.—A solid basis of facts upon which to base the conservation programme is recognized quite widely as being essential, and over the past years there have been a considerable number of investigations on the food habits, migrations, reproduction, distribution, life histories, ethology, and population dynamics of various wildfowl in Canada and the U.S. Important studies have also been made of the ecology of marshes and lakes, for the purpose of improving waterfowl habitat. The ornithologist who is interested in the publications on American wildfowl may find them currently indexed and abstracted in the Wildlife Review, a journal issued in modest but very useful form by the Fish and Wildlife Service for the past 17 years.

The annual "inventories" of the North American wildfowl population conducted by the U.S. and Canadian governments, in co-operation with the States and Provinces, are designed to keep current the best possible information on the continental waterfowl populations, so that the annual hunting regulations may be drafted accordingly, and for planning other conservation practices as well, The mid-winter inventory, in January, selects that date when the fowl are most concentrated on their wintering areas, just after the shooting season is finished. In the early spring, when the ducks have just returned to the breeding grounds, a survey of the breeding population is attempted, and finally, in midsummer, an attempt is made to measure as accurately as possible the actual production of young.

All three of these extensive surveys make use of aeroplanes to a considerable extent, because the area to be covered is so very great, and the Fish and Wildlife Service maintains a fleet of several planes especially for this work, and a corps of "flyway biologists" and trained pilots and observers, who have by now explored, at least from the air, most of the important wildfowl areas from goose breeding grounds in the Arctic, to the wintering areas of Pintail and Blue-winged Teal in northern South America. The more important of these areas are all surveyed annually, and the results published in a lithoprinted volume issued each year by the Canadian Wildlife Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service co-operating.

In the discussion which followed, Mr. E. L. PARRISH spoke for all wildfowlers when he said there was no doubt that the Americans lead the world in wildfowl conservation. He had been particularly impressed with the American programme of habitat restoration, which we would have to emulate. Professor Swanson's talk had clearly shown the need for properly qualified scientists to grapple with the problem.

Captain WILSON STEPHENS said that although we could not nationalise our wildfowl, we were all looking to Nature Conservancy, which in the past year had been increasingly supported by the Wildfowlers' Association, so that it began to look as if we were developing our equivalent of the Fish and Wildlife Service of the U.S.A.

Mr. MAX NICHOLSON referred to a recent meeting at Hull between the Nature Conservancy, the Wildfowlers' Association and local interests, all of whom had agreed to set up a sanctuary for geese on part of the Humber —which showed that at long last positive progress was being made.

Remarks on The Taxonomy of the Yellow Bunting, *Emberiza citrinella* Linnaeus

PART III

by DR. JAMES M. HARRISON

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VII MUTATIONS AND THEIR POSSIBLE SIGNIFICANCE

Under this heading must be considered firstly characters which are either not entirely constant in all populations, or which only occur in a percentage in each population, but which nevertheless have an evolutionary significance, and secondly cases of true heterochrosis, e.g. albescence or albinotic individuals which have no taxonomic importance. Such colour aberrations would seem to occur in about the order of $\frac{1}{2}\%$ to 1%. They are found variously as a general pallor, i.e. a dilution of all the natural colours with correspondingly pale markings and represent in all probability the state of chlorochroism of Rensch ; or a total or partial albinism, the latter usually symmetrically distributed, while a bright yellow phase also occurs which would seem to represent instances of schizochrosis (Haecker, 1908). These colour aberrations occur in both sexes.

The former group of mutants are, on the other hand, characterised not

by any phase of heterochroism, but by the presence of certain markings of the head. In its commonest form this may be described best as the presence of chestnut moustachial stripes. The markings may be well defined or only represented by the merest fleck or two, often only visible by examination with a magnifying lens. These moustachial stripes, however, are only a partial expression of the full mutation. When fully developed, this mutation is well shown in the plate illustrating the paper by the late Mr. H. L. Popham[14] on the birds of the Yenessei River. This shows the more usual variety which was named *E.c.* var. *brehmi*, while the fully developed pattern was referred to as *E.c. mollessoni*. Mr. Popham quotes Mr. Zarudny as writing the following:—"One of the very numerous aberrations of *Emberiza citrinella* occurring in this country is most interesting, as it reminds one so forcibly of *Emberiza leucocephala*. It is virtually a type of individual variation which I would like to name after Mr. Mollesson, who procured the first specimen———The head and throat are coloured—as in old males of *Emberiza leucocephala*, with the sole exception that the white portions in that species are replaced in our bird by bright yellow.' It is particularly to be noted that besides the chestnut throat, this colour will be found to extend towards the posterior and lower limits of the ear-coverts, while above, it may be found as a small triangular marking at the posterior end of the supercilium. When this is present, the small feathers of the posterior third of the orbicular ring may also be chestnut. In no specimen examined has any trace of chestnut been found in the supercilium in front of or above the eye, nor in the loral region.

The widespread nature of this mutation is such as to invest it, in the writer's opinion, with considerable phylogenetic significance. The view that it may indicate a mutation of close relationship with *E. leucocephala* cannot be lightly dismissed. The chestnut moustaches are certainly linked with the chestnut throat and with the presence of posterior superciliary markings of the same colour. The presence of this mutation is also probably linked with an intensification of the yellow of the underparts. This circumstance suggests that the longer winged, brighter yellow forms, i.e. *E.c. sylvestris* and *E.c. erythrogenys*, in which the mutation under discussion is very frequently found, may represent the prototypes of the species. The central European birds, *E.c. sylvestris*, on account of the greater constancy of the longer wing measurement, may represent the oldest form from which have later arisen the northern and north-western populations. In all cases examined in the present investigation, the condition has been found symmetrically distributed.

An extremely well-marked mutation of this kind is an adult, non-breeding male in the City of Norwich Castle Museum collection. This bird was obtained at Leeds Bridge, Cambridgeshire, on 9th February, 1901 (E. S. Montagu coll.). The specimen has the fully developed features of *E.c.* var. "*brehmi*," i.e. heavy chestnut moustachial markings passing backwards to the dark sepia patch of the ear-coverts, while the posterior supercilium is also considerably streaked with chestnut. In front, under the base of the lower mandibles, the moustaches almost unite by intermittent flecks of chestnut. Other specimens obtained in the breeding season showing this mutation, though less fully developed, are to be found in the

[14] *Ibis*, 1901, p. 453, Pl. x.

Bolton Museum series, 17th April, 1951, West Houghton, Lancashire, and in the British Museum series, Lancing, Sussex, 1st April, 1884. Another Sussex specimen, obtained in 1890, with well-marked moustaches and posterior superciliary chestnut markings, is in the City of Norwich Castle Museum collection.

While, naturally enough, these reflections upon the significance of this character must be of a speculative nature, the character is one demanding other than just passing notice. It would seem to occur in most populations in the order of 15% to 30% in its moustachial manifestation, while the more fully developed state with its expression in the ear-coverts to any extent and in the posterior supercilium, occurs perhaps in 5% of individuals. I have seen no example showing the fully developed chestnut throat.

Less common is that mutation represented by a very heavy and intense chestnut pectoral band coalescing in the mid-line to form a sharp and broad division between the throat and abdominal region, but two examples, an adult in my own series, obtained near Broadway, Worcestershire on 11th June, 1937, and another obtained at Dalamere, Cheshire on 14th July, 1878, in the British Museum series, exemplify this type. The condition is linked with a brighter tone of the underparts, and an increase in the striations of the flanks. The combination of brighter yellow underparts, and increase in the pectoral and flank striations is found in the more western populations of the species in the British Isles, and in the eastern European and western Asiatic *E.c. erythrogenys*, so this trend in mutation may be expressive of the eastern genetic influence, while an increase in intensity of the yellow underparts, without any increase of the pectoral band and flank striations, is undoubtedly a character significant of a southern genetic influence.

VIII SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This paper has sought to clarify the taxonomy of *Emberiza citrinella* Linnaeus and its races.

The species has a wide distribution in Europe, though absent or rare in the south of France, and only present in small numbers in northern Spain and Portugal. In Asia, it is distributed from Siberia to Syria and Iraq, where it is said to occur in winter only (Allouse,[15] 1953). It has been found as far east as Pekin.

On the material which has been available the following conclusions have been reached. The racial entities, though discernible in non-breeding material, are best studied in series of breeding males. Females and immatures are not reliable in so far as racial determination is concerned, and exemplify the fact that the plumages of females and immatures represent an earlier and more primitive stage in the evolution of the species, and support the view that ontogeny reproduces phylogeny.

The characters of the different geographical races are best seen in breeding males before altered by wear and fading ; they are also well seen in freshly moulted autumn material.

The significance of measurements and of mutations is discussed in the light of modern concepts, and in their bearing upon evolution and phylogeny.

The following, in the writer's opinion, represents the taxonomic position of this species and its races:—

I *Emberiza citrinella citrinella* Linnaeus.

A well differentiated form which shows a tendency to dimorphism, i.e., having a light and a dark phase, the latter particularly in the females.

Distribution: Europe, the Scandinavian Peninsula, i.e. Sweden and Norway; Western

[15] *The Avifauna of Iraq*, p. 143.

Siberia and the Baltic countries, where, however, some intergradation with the eastern race, *E.c. erythrogenys*, may occur.

II *Emberiza citrinella sylvestris* Brehm

A well-defined race, both in colour and on measurement.

Distribution: Europe: central Germany, Switzerland, much of the Great Lowland Plain in Europe, includng Italy, south-western France and in all probability also northern Spain and Portugal. Birds from Roumania, Austria and Hungary are possibly intermediate with this form and the eastern race, *E.c. erythrogenys*.

III *Emberiza citrinella nebulosa* Gengler

This form, which is as yet rather unstable, may be regarded as in the process of differentiation in that part of its range which lies in the eastern and south-eastern counties of England. Outside that area in its present state, it exhibits a percentage of individuals conforming to birds from the eastern half of England, the remainder, probably in the region of 70%, inclining in their characters either to the southern *E.c. sylvestris* or to the northern *E.c. citrinella*.

Distribution: (*E.c. nebulosa* sensu stricto).

England, eastern and southern-eastern counties, roughly east of a line from Flamborough Head in Yorkshire, to Start Point in Devon.

On the Continental mainland, the form behaves as a variable intermediate with some individuals resembling birds from the eastern half of England and with other mutations, some of which resemble the nominate, others the central and south European populations. It is presumably highly heterozygous.

Europe: northern France, Channel Islands, Belgium, Holland, Denmark and northern Germany.

IV *Emberiza citrinella caliginosa* Clancey.

This is a recognisable form which was described from north Scotland. It has doubtlessly acquired its racial characters as a result of evolution in an area of relatively high degrees of temperature and humidity. It is the author's opinion that this phenologically determined race has now become genetically fixed.

Distribution: Scotland, Wales and Eire, with a well-marked intermediate population (distinct from *E.c. nebulosa*) in the western half of England and the Isle of Man.

V *Emberiza citrinella erythrogenys* Brehm

This race exemplifies the effects of evolution under the influence of a steppe climate in consequence of which it is extremely well differentiated.

Distribution: Europe: Jugoslavia, Bulgaria and eastwards into Asia Minor and western U.S.S.R.

It is probable that a zone of intergradation exists between this form and the nominate race from western Siberia south-westwards through Finland, the Baltic countries and Poland as far south as the Carpathian Mountains, which range probably represents a natural barrier between this race and the central European bird, *E.c. sylvestris*. Some intergradation with the latter form occurs in southern Hungary and northern Jugoslavia.

IX ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grateful acknowledgments are hereby extended to the following for the loan of specimens and for other assistance. To the Trustees of the British Museum, Natural History, and to Mr. J. D. Macdonald for permitting me to use the entire series of this species in their collections, in all 222 specimens. To Dr. A. C. Stephen, of the Royal Scottish Museum, for similar facilities. To Count Nils Gyldenstolpe, Director of the Royal Natural History Museum, Stockholm, for the loan of Swedish material ; to Dr. Holger Holgersen, of the Stavanger Museum, for placing at my disposal breeding Norwegian birds as well as others from the Scandinavian Peninsula ; to Dr. Finn Salomonsen, Director of the Copenhagen Museum, for the loan of Danish specimens and also some from Norway and Jugoslavia and other localities. A series of specimens from various European countries, particularly the Netherlands and Denmark was received from Dr. K. H. Voous and Mr. J. G. van Marle.

The Italian specimens included a series contained in the British Museum collection, mostly now unreliable from age and also unfortunately lacking exact data. To compensate for this, I was fortunate in receiving the loan of a small series of recently col-

lected birds from Dr. E. Moltoni of the Milan Museum. In this research I have been very fortunate in being afforded the opportunity of examining very lengthy and comprehensive series of British-taken specimens from the following sources: firstly from Mr. R. Wagstaffe from the City of Liverpool Public Museums and from his own series, which included a small number from the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man; from Mr. Alfred Hazelwood of the Bolton Museum, whose extensive series from Lancashire were of great importance in clarifying the cline of this species in the British Isles; from Mr. E. A. Ellis, Keeper of Natural History of the City of Norwich Castle Museum for the loan of specimens; to Miss Geraldine Roche, of the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin, for the loan of Irish and other specimens.

In addition to the above series, the writer is indebted to Mr. P. A. Clancey, Director of the Durban Museum, South Africa, for the gift of some topotypical material of his Scottish race, *E.c. caliginosa* and to Mr. C. A. Fleming of Wellington, New Zealand, for a small series of breeding birds from New Zealand, which have proved of exceptional interest.

From private collections, the author has had the loan of breeding birds from northern France from Mons. Noël Mayaud, while P. A. Hens and Dr. C. Eijkman provided some Dutch specimens. In addition to the above, Dr. Jeffery G. Harrison's collection, containing examples from north-western Germany and the writer's own collection containing examples from many countries, particularly the Balkan Peninsula, have been utilised. Dr. Wolfgang Makatsch has also supplemented the series from Germany, and Dr. David Harrison from south-western France and Iraq.

In Defence of the Principle of the "First Revisor"

By Dr. Dean Amadon

Received 8th November, 1954

In the B.B.O.C. (Vol. 74, No. 7, October 1, 1954), Captain C. H. B. Grant has attacked the principle of the "first revisor" in problems of nomenclature, citing as an example of this supposedly pernicious practice the efforts by Dr. James P. Chapin and myself (Ostrich, 1952, p. 123) to preserve the name *philippensis* for the Spotted-billed Pelican. It frequently happened among the older ornithological writers that descriptions of several new species, often poorly characterized, were given in quick succession in the same work. Some of these descriptions are identifiable, others are not. The names that can be identified have been in use, often for decades. Later, however, it sometimes happens that a researcher, with greater or lesser justification, believes that he can identify some of the names that have hitherto been regarded as unidentifiable. If such a name happens to have page or line priority over a name that has been in general use, and if line priority is sustained, the well known name that has been in general use will be displaced. To prevent this kind of disturbing change in scientific names, the International Committee on Zoological Nomenclature has taken the position that all the names appearing in a single publication are to be regarded as having appeared simultaneously, that is, page and line priority does not affect the availability of names. But it often happened that the same species was inadvertently described several times under different names in the same publication. To handle such situations, the principle of the *first revisor* was drawn up; it states that of several equally available names, the one selected by the first subsequent revisor is to be retained even though some other name applying to the same taxonomic entity is later shown to have page or line priority. The principle of the *first revisor* was temporarily jeopardized by the Paris

Zoological Congress in 1948, but, following much opposition to this retrogressive action, the more recent Copenhagen Zoological Congress returned to the previous acceptance of the *first revisor* principle (Copenhagen Decisions, 1953, Art. 28, pp. 66–67).

With this preamble, let us now consider the pelicans! Gmelin, in his edition of the *Systema Naturae* (1789) briefly described three pelicans, *Pelecanus roseus*, *P. manillensis*, and *P. philippensis*. Bonaparte, in his *Conspectus*, concluded that all three names apply to the Spotted-billed Pelican; he used the name *philippensis*, perhaps because he regarded its identity as more certain, with *roseus* and *manillensis* as synonyms. Thereby he acted as *first revisor*. The name *philippensis* was subsequently used for this species in the British Museum's *Catalogue*, in Peters' *Check-list*, in Stuart Baker's *Fauna of British India*, etc.

On the other hand, the name *roseus*, because Gmelin's description did not tally very well with the Spotted-billed Pelican, was subsequently used for a species supposed to be very closely allied to the Roseate Pelican, *Pelecanus onocrotalus* Linnaeus, but differing from it by being slightly smaller and by having 22 instead of 24 tail feathers. Even Peters listed *Pelecanus roseus* as a separate species. Most authors assumed that it was, at best, no more than a sub species of the Roseate Pelican. Chapin and I (*op. cit.*) were dubious that the form *roseus* is valid in any sense and suggested keeping *onocrotalus* as a monotypic species, although, admittedly, more material from eastern Asia needs to be examined.

The name *Pelecanus roseus* of Gmelin has as type locality Manila, as do the other two pelicans named by him at the same time. Since there is no record of the Roseate Pelican from the Philippine Islands, Mackworth-Praed and Grant (1934, Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, 55: 63–65) decided that *roseus* must, after all, refer to the Spotted-billed Pelican. (Actually the description, as already mentioned, does not agree very well with that form and there is no reason why Roseate Pelicans could not occasionally wander to the Philippines from the coast of Indo-China where they nest, or from elsewhere.) Mackworth-Praed and Grant went further and stated that since *roseus* has page priority over *philippensis*, the former name must displace the latter. This conclusion runs counter to the principle of the first revisor and is erroneous. Nevertheless, as so often seems to be the case, the change was accepted with undue alacrity by the authors of several important recent works, even though it meant replacing the established name *Pelecanus philippensis* not merely by another name but by one whose association in the literature with a form allied with the Roseate Pelican could only lead to confusion. It was for this reason that Chapin and I stated that if no other means of saving the name *philippensis* were at hand, we would be in favour of petitioning the International Commission to have it set up as a *nomen conservandum*. But the clear restatement of the principle of the *first revisor* at Copenhagen makes such recourse unnecessary. Incidentally, Captain Grant is scarcely justified in suggesting that this principle hinders the *taxonomic* revisions of the systematist, rather it merely forms one point in the Rules as they affect *nomenclatorial* revisions (of which the fewer the better!).

One may add that the tenor of the discussions on nomenclature as published in the preliminary Copenhagen decisions leaves no doubt that

taxonomists will be well advised to heed the increasingly insistent clamor of other biologists against all avoidable changes in scientific names. Otherwise, the matter may be taken out of our hands, as has already been attempted by certain groups in applied botany, who have set up a list of names of their own.

A New Race of Lark from South West Africa

Captain C. H. B. Grant and Mr. C. W. Mackworth-Praed sent the following:

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Calendrella cinerea ongumaensis, new race

Description: Differs from *Calendrella cinerea spleniata* (Strickland) from Walvis Bay in having broader and blacker markings on the mantle and scapulars and in being whiter from breast to under tail-coverts.

Distribution: Onguma, eastern end of Etosha Pan, northern South West Africa.

Type: In the British Museum. Female adult. Onguma, Etosha Pan, northern South West Africa. 7th October, 1936. Collected by W. Hoesch. Collector's No. 575. Brit. Mus. Reg. No. 1937.2.17.66.

Measurements of Type: Wing 95, culmen from base 17, tail 63, tarsus 22 mm.

Remarks: Four specimens examined. The type is completing the moult, the others are in worn dress. Wings of the three others measure 91 to 97 mm.

On the type locality of *Trachyphonus vaillantii* Ranzani, Elem. Zool. 3, pt. 2, p. 159, 1821: South Africa.

by Mr. C. W. Mackworth-Praed and Captain C. H. B. Grant

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This name is founded on Levaillant's Le Promepic in his Promerops, p. 77, pl. 32, 1806, and on p. 78 of his work, he states that he found this species in Great Namaqualand, *i.e.* north of the Orange River.

Vincent (Bull. B.O.C. 55, p. 94, 1935), gives south-eastern Cape Province as the type locality. This species is not known from that area and therefore this type locality should not be accepted.

Levaillant's furthest east on his eastern journey was near Tarkastad and the Great Fish River. We have recently studied Levaillant's northern journey and there now appears to be little doubt that he did cross the Orange River and proceeded into Great Namaqualand to about the latitude of Keetmanshoop.

In Vol. 2 of his Travels, p. 320, he mentions Barbets as occurring on his Lion River, which can be identified with the Ham River in south-eastern South West Africa. We therefore suggest that Ham River, south-eastern South West Africa be accepted as the type locality of *Trachyphonus vaillantii* Ranzani. In its western areas this species appears to have a

patchy distribution, as it was found at Lake Ngami by the Woosnam Expedition, but Roberts in Ann. Trans. Mus. 16, p. 110, 1935, states that they neither saw nor heard this bird at Lake Ngami. It has been recorded at Huilla, Angola, by Bocage, and is known from eastern Bechuanaland.

On the type locality of *Eremialector bicinctus* (Temminck), Pig. et Gall. 3, p. 250, 1815

by Mr. C. W. Mackworth-Praed and Captain C. H. B. Grant

Received 8th November, 1954

Temminck gives Great Fish River and remarks "dans le pays de grands Namaquois sur les bords et au-delá de la grande riviere des poissons", and states that the male and female were "deposited in my collection by my friend Levaillant". These two specimens are now in the Leiden Museum.

Recent investigations into Levaillant's northern journey satisfies us that he not only reached the Orange River but crossed this river to the northward as far as about the latitude of Keetmanshoop. Levaillant did not see the Fish River in South West Africa, and his Fish River is the upper waters of the Leeu River which flows westward into the Fish River.

We know that this Sandgrouse occurs in central South West Africa and at Ariamsvley on the railway in the south-eastern corner of South West Africa, and no doubt it also occurs between these two areas and therefore in the country over which Levaillant travelled. We therefore give Headwaters of the Leeu River, south-eastern South West Africa, as the type locality of *Eremialector bicinctus* (Temminck).

The correct reference to *Criniger falkensteini* Reichenow

by Captain C. H. B. Grant and Mr. C. W. Mackworth-Praed

Received 8th November, 1954

Reichenow described this bird in two journals, the Correspondenzblatt der Afrikanischen Gesellschaft, No. 10, p. 179, 1874, and in the Journal für Ornithologie, No. 128, p. 458, 1874. No. 128 of the J.f.O., was published in October, 1874, but there is no date of publication of the Corresp. Afr. Ges., other than 1874. The copy of this work in the Library of the Royal Geographical Society covers Nos. 1–20, 1873 to 1876, and is bound in one volume, dated Berlin 1877, and was apparently so issued in Germany. The volume is paginated consecutively throughout. There appears, however, to be no doubt that it was published and issued to the public in separate numbers in the years stated on these numbers. Nos. 4 to 10 are dated 1874 and on page 175 of No. 10 there is a statement that the Homeyer Expedition left Hamburg on the 19th December, and in No. 11, 1875, p. 193, there is mention of a letter from Homeyer dated 1st January, 1875, at Madeira. This evidence shows that No. 10 could not have been issued earlier than the second half of December, 1874, and as the issue date of the J.f.O., No. 128, was October, the correct reference to *Criniger falkensteini* Reichenow is J.f.O., p. 458, 1874.

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DINNERS AND MEETINGS FOR 1955

15th February, March Meeting with B.O.U., 19th April, 17th May, 20th September, 18th October, 15th November, 13th December.

SEPARATES

Contributors who desire free copies of the Bulletin containing their notes should state so on their MS., otherwise these will not be ordered. These will be supplied up to a maximum of fifty.

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Members who make a contribution at a Meeting should hand the MS. to the Editor at that Meeting. As the proofs will be corrected by the Editor, it is essential that the MS. should be correct and either typed or written very clearly with scientific and place names in block letters. The first mention of a scientific name should be spelt out in full, i.e., genus, specific name, racial name (if any), and author. Any further mention of the same name need only have the initial letter of the genus and no further mention of the author.

If no MS. is handed to the Editor at the Meeting, a note will be inserted mentioning the contribution.

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Communications are not restricted to members of the British Ornithologists' Club, and contributions up to 1,500 words on taxonomy and related subjects will be considered from all who care to send them to The Editor, Dr. J. G. Harrison, "Merriewood", St. Botolph's Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Communications relating to other matters should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, N. J. P. Wadley, Esq., 14 Elm Place, London, S.W.7.

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Edited by
DR. JEFFERY HARRISON

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BULLETIN

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The five hundred and thirty-seventh meeting was held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, on Tuesday, 15th February, following a dinner at 6.30 p.m.

Chairman: COLONEL R. MEINERTZHAGEN.

Members present, 39; Guests, 13; Guest of the Club, Mr. James Fisher. Total 53.

Bird Watching in eastern North America

Mr. James Fisher illustrated with Kodachrome slides, an account of an ornithological journey from Newfoundland to Mexico, part of a tour of the continent of North America made by himself and Dr. Roger Tory Peterson in the spring of 1953. He discussed the gradual reduction of the Holarctic and Palearctic elements in the avifauna as the observers proceeded south, and gave an account of his first impressions on entering the neotropical region in the cloud forests of central Mexico.

Among places illustrated were the Gannet colony of Cape St. Mary in Newfoundland, the Appalachian Mountains in spring, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the Everglades National Park, the Dry Tortugas Wildlife Refuge, the Ivory Woodpecker Reservation on the Apalichicola River in North Florida, the McIlhenny Heron Refuge on Avery Island, Louisiana, Lydia Ann Island in a coastal wildlife refuge of Texas, the desert of North Mexico and the cloud forest round the village of Xilitla in the limestone mountains of the southern portion of the Mexican state of San Luis Potosí.

Among the species illustrated were: *Sula dactylatra; Sula leucogaster; Sula bassana; Fregata magnificens; Ardea occidentalis; Ardea herodias; Casmerodius albus; Leucophoyx thula; Dichromanassa rufescens; Bubulcus ibis; Hydranassa tricolor; Mycteria americana; Aythya affinis; Porphyrula martinica; Larus atricilla; Rissa tridactyla; Sterna fuscata; Thalasseus maximus; Anous stolidus.*

Comments on Geographical Variation in the Knysna Scrub-Warbler *Bradypterus sylvaticus* Sundevall of South Africa

by Mr. P. A. Clancey

Received 10th December, 1954.

The rare and little-known *Bradypterus sylvaticus* Sundevall, 1858: Knysna, southern Cape Province, is confined to the coastal forests of the southern and eastern Cape and of Natal, where it inhabits dense, gloomy tangles of undergrowth and forest debris. Our knowledge of the extent of geographical variation within the species is still very imperfect. Sclater, "Systema Avium Æthiopicarum", part ii, 1930, p. 511, recognises no racial variation, dismissing *Bradypterus pondoensis* Haagner, 1909: Port St. Johns, Pondoland, as "doubtfully distinct" from *B. sylvaticus*. Haagner, "Journal of the South African Ornithologists' Union", vol. v., 2, 1909, p. 90, in describing his *B. pondoensis*, states that the new "species" is a "closely related form of *B. sylvaticus*". Roberts, "Birds of South Africa", 1940, p. 255, accepts *B. pondoensis* as a valid, dark race of *B. sylvaticus*, but Vincent, in his more recent "Check List of the Birds of South Africa", 1952, p. 79, follows Sclater in recognising no races. Material of this species available to workers is extremely limited, and I can only trace ten specimens in South African collections, all of which I have examined. Study of this material tends to support the views expressed earlier by Haagner and Roberts, and it would seem desirable to recognise two races of *B. sylvaticus*.

Sundevall described *B. sylvaticus* on the basis of specimens collected in the Knysna district by the traveller, Victorin. Material of the topotypical populations is fragmentary in the extreme, there being only three specimens available in South Africa at the present time, all of which were collected by Marais at Caddocksbush, Knysna, in the years 1898–1899. These specimens are now in the collection of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria. Haagner, *loc. cit.*, states that he had the use of these and additional material from Knysna in the private collection of a Mr. Lionel Taylor (not traced). Specimens of the topotypical populations are a dark reddish olivaceous brown on the upper-parts, wings and tail, and on the ventral surfaces are dusky white on the throat and abdomen, and the sides of the breast and body and the flanks are heavily washed with olivaceous brown. On the lower throat are nebulous longitudinal striae of a similar colour to the sides of the breast, and which tend to become diffused over the greater part of the pectoral surface. The wing-measurements (flattened) of 1 ♂ and 2 ♀♀ are 59, 60.5, 61.5 mm. As far as can be accurately assessed on the basis of three skins collected over fifty years ago, the Knysna populations are constant and show little individual variation, but it should be noted that Roberts, *loc. cit.*, records that a single bird collected

on Table Mountain, far to the West, is darker than topotypes. Apart from the isolated Table Mountain record, which may or may not indicate the presence of an additional, unnamed race, *B. s. sylvaticus* is known only from the forested district of Knysna in the southern Cape Province.

In the heavily forested regions of coastal Pondoland and to a lesser degree in the remnants of the coastal forests of Natal occur birds which differ significantly from those from Knysna. Of this group of populations I have seen specimens from Pondoland (Port St. Johns) (including the type of *B. s. pondoensis*); Sea View, on the Mntafufu River; Lombazi) and Natal (Wentworth and the Bluff, Durban), a series of seven skins in all. In series, this race, *B. s. pondoensis*, is generally darker, more olive-brown, on the upper parts, wings and tail than *B. s. sylvaticus* of Knysna, though occasionally not distinguishable on this character (as shown by a ♂ from Lombazi, Pondoland, collected by Chiazzari, 25 August, 1943), but it is consistently different when viewed on account of the more dusky breast, and the darker sides of the body and flanks, which are noticeably tinged with yellowish. In *B. s. pondoensis* the throat striae tend to be localized and not diffused over the greater part of the pectoral surface as in the nominotypical race. Haagner, in describing his *B. s. pondoensis*, states that it is smaller than *B. s. sylvaticus*, but that is not borne out by the material now available. The wing-measurements of 5 ♂♂ and 2♀♀ of *B. s. pondoensis* are as follows: 56, 59, 59, 60, 60, 60.5, 62 mm. Only one specimen, the *Type*, was available to Haagner when he drew up his description of *B. s. pondoensis*.

The nomenclature, criteria and ranges of the two races of the rare *B. sylvaticus* can be defined as follows:

1. *Bradypterus sylvaticus sylvaticus* Sundevall.

Bradypterus sylvaticus Sundevall, 'K. Sv. Vet.-Akad. Handl. (n.s.), ii, No. 10, 1858. p. 30: Knysna, southern Cape Province, South Africa.

Upper-parts, wings and tail dark reddish olivaceous brown. Ventral surfaces with the sides of the breast and body and the flanks strongly washed with olivaceous brown; nebulous striae on throat diffused over the breast.

Wing (flattened): 59–61.5 (60.3) mm. (Three specimens examined).

Type: In the Naturhistoriska Riksmuseum, Stockholm.

Range: The Knysna and associated forests of the southern Cape Province.

Note: The record given by Roberts, *loc. cit.*, of a specimen from Table Mountain, south-western Cape Province, described as being as dark as *B. s. pondoensis*, perhaps indicates the presence of an undescribed race to the west of the stated range of *B. s. sylvaticus*.

2. *Bradypterus sylvaticus pondoensis* Haagner.

Bradypterus pondoensis Haagner, "Journal of the South African Ornithologists' Union", vol. v., 2, 1909, p. 90: Port St. Johns, Pondoland, eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

Darker, more olive-brown on upper-parts, wings and tail than *B. s. sylvaticus*. On ventral surfaces breast more dusky, and sides of the body and flanks darker and tinged with yellowish; throat striae restricted and not diffused over the breast.

Wings (flattened): 56–62 (58.07) mm. (Seven specimens examined).

Type: In the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria.

Range: The coastal forests of Pondoland, eastern Cape Province, and Natal.

A new Chough from the highlands of Abyssinia

by Dr. A. L. Rand and Dr. C. Vaurie

Received 22nd December, 1954

The subspecific status of the population of *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* which breeds in the highlands of Abyssinia has been questioned by Vaurie (1954, Amer. Mus. Novitates, No. 1658, p. 6) in a recent review of the species because this population is extremely isolated by distances varying from about 2500 to more than 4000 kilometers from the nearest breeding populations in northwestern Africa and Iran. Vaurie had no specimens from Abyssinia but questioned whether the statements in the literature are correct that this population is identical with that of Iran, the name of which is *docilis* S. G. Gmelin, 1774.

Since this paper was published, we have examined two series from Abyssinia, one of five specimens in the collection of the British Museum (examined by Vaurie) and one of eight specimens in the collection of the Chicago Natural History Museum (examined by Rand who sent six of these specimens to Vaurie). We find that the population of Abyssinia is distinct from *docilis* or from *barbarus*, the name under which Vaurie in 1954 separated the population of north-western Africa. We believe that it is desirable to call attention to the characters of this isolated population and propose for it the name

Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax baileyi, new subspecies.

Type: Chicago Natural History Museum No. 83557; adult male; Ras Dashan, northern Abyssinia; 11,200 feet; March 25th, 1927; A. M. Bailey, collector.

Diagnosis: Differs from *barbarus* by having a longer wing, similar in length to that of *docilis* but differing from the latter by having a longer bill. Differs from both by being duller, less glossy on the wing as well as on the mantle and on the underparts. It is the dullest population of the species known to us.

Measurements: Type, wing 323, tail 153, bill 62. Comparative measurements in adult males, *docilis*, 11 specimens, wing 306–330 (315), tail 132–161 (145), bill 52–61 (56.8); *barbarus*, from Morocco and Algeria, 15 specimens, wing 290–310 (302), tail 129–153 (145), bill 61–67 (63.4); *baileyi*, 7 specimens, wing 310–329 (318.6); tail 145–155 (150.6), bill 54–56 (60.6 mm.).

Remarks: Though this is not a particularly well marked race, it is as distinct as are most of the races in this species, and its characters make it impossible to combine this extremely isolated population with either *docilis* or with *barbarus*.

This subspecies is named for Dr. Alfred M. Bailey, now Director of the Denver Natural History Museum, who was part of the 1926–27 Daily-News Abyssian Expedition of the Chicago Natural History Museum.

A new Lark from South West Africa

by Mr. C. M. N. White

Received 30th December, 1954.

Mirafra africanoides rubidior new race

Description: the most intensley red of all the forms of *M. africanoides* in South West Africa; nearest to *M. a. gobabisensis* (Roberts), but a deeper and richer red on the upperside, sides of the face and wing coverts and wing margins; breast and flanks with a more decided rusty wash; black streaking heavier.

Type: male adult collected by W. Hoesch at Ozondjache, west of Waterberg, and near Otjiwarongo, South West Africa, 22 October, 1954. In my collection.

Measurements of Type: wing 93, tail 63, culmen from skull 17 mm.

Distribution: At present only known from the type locality, a volcanic rock, where two males and a female, all identical, were collected.

Remarks: I am much indebted to Mrs. P. B. Hall for comments on the material in the British Museum of this species, and to Mr. J. D. Macdonald who kindly allowed me to have information about the arrangement of the South African races which he has adopted in his report on the British Museum expedition to South West Africa. My own material reviewed in the light of Mr. Macdonald's arrangement agrees with it. The new race was compared with the following material of other forms in South West Africa: *M. a. harei* Roberts 5; *M. a. omaruru* (Roberts) 6; *M. a. gobabisensis* (Roberts) 11; *M. a. sarwensis* (Roberts) 3. The limited range of this very dark race may be judged from the fact that the pale race *M. a. omaruru* occurs at Franzfontein to the west (fide Macdonald) as well as at Omaruru and Okahandja to the south; the palest race *M. a. sarwensis* at Tsumeb to the north east and *M. a. gobabisensis* at Osire on the south side of the Waterberg, to the south east.

A new race of Lark from Bechuanaland

by Mr. R. H. N. Smithers

Received 5th February, 1955.

Mirafra damarensis nata new race.

Description: Differs from all other races in being ashy-grey above, greyer than *Mirafra damarensis damarensis* Sharpe, and with bases of feathers of top of head dusky, not rufous.

Distribution: North-eastern Bechuanaland.

Type: In the National Museum of S. Rhodesia, Bulawayo. Male adult. Ten miles west of Nata, north-eastern Bechuanaland, 17th October, 1953. Collector's No. B.110. Reg. No. N.M. 18668.

Measurements of Type: Wing 86; culmen from base 17; tail 57; tarsus 25 mm.

Remarks: Except for the dusky base of the feathers on the top of the head this new race agrees with *Mirafra damarensis* in the shape and size of

the bill, the amount of rufous on the under side of the wings, the length of the first primary, and the pale outer web of the outermost tail feather. It differs from *Mirafra rufocinnamomea* in that this species has both webs of the outermost tail feather pale; the rufous on the second primary is much narrower and the bill is less heavy.

The date of priority of certain generic names

by Captain C. H. B. Grant

Received 5th February, 1955.

Some of the older authors regarded genera more as we now regard species and gave a list of genera with descriptions as a list of species; whereas it is now accepted that a properly constituted scientific name of a bird is a combination of both the generic and specific terms (the latter including the geographical races). It has been said that a generic name with a description, but not attached to a species has no standing in nomenclature. Such a generic name, however, cannot be a *nomen nudum* as it has been properly introduced with a description, and so the name is valid. It does not actually come into use, however, until a valid species name is associated with it, whether the author attaches the species name to the genus without a comment or cites the species as the type of the genus.

This is the first reviser procedure and the action is sacrosanct, as once such a generic name and a scientific species name have been joined they cannot be divorced by any worker.*

This seems clear, but what is not clear is the priority date of the genus in question, as to whether its priority date is that when it was first published or when it first had a species name attached to it. I do not think any confusion would arise if we accept the priority date of such a genus as the date of its first introduction into literature with a description, but with no scientific species name. If we should accept the priority date as that when a species was first attached to it we are not only ignoring the fact that the genus is valid on its first introduction, but we shall undoubtedly find that other generic names have been introduced between the two dates.

One example may be quoted:

Gavia: Forster, Ench. Hist. Nat. p. 38, 1788, first introduced the genus with a description but without any species name, and Boie, "Isis", p. 980, 1826, established it by attaching to it *Larus eburneus* Gmelin, 1789.

I suggested that *Gavia* was of Boie 1826, and not of Forster, 1788, (Bull. B.O.C. 74, p. 70, 1954); but I now consider this to be incorrect and it should be reversed.

I have to thank Mr. W. H. T. Tams, (Dept. of Entomology, B.M.N.H.), Mr. R. W. Sims (Bird Room, B.M.N.H.), and Mr. R. D. Pope (Commonwealth Institute of Entomology), for allowing me to consult them and for checking this note.

*The genus and the type species are not divorced when a genus is treated as a synonym.

A Dwarf Egg of the Moorhen, *Gallinula chloropus chloropus* (Linnaeus)

by Mr. Bryan L. Sage

Received 17th December, 1954.

Dwarf eggs are not infrequently produced by many species of birds, and many records of such have been published from time to time in the ornithological literature. So far as I am aware, however, there are very few such records relating to this species.

I have a dwarf egg of this species that was taken at Totteridge, Hertfortshire, on 15th June, 1946, the nest contained eight other normal eggs. The ground colour of the dwarf egg is light stone very faintly tinged with purple, and it is sparsely spotted and blotched with bluish-grey markings. It measures 28.5 × 21.5 mm. and contained a single perfect yolk. The average measurements of 100 normal British eggs are 44.44 × 31.41 mm. and the minimum recorded 36.5 × 26.6 mm., these figures are taken from Witherby's *Handbook of British Birds* V: 200.

I think I am correct in saying that eggs of this type are formed either by the ova breaking away from the ovary prematurely or as a result of egg formation round a foreign body. Dr. James M. Harrison (1951) has pointed out that dwarf eggs containing complete yolks are known to the Germans as "Zwergeier" and those containing little or no yolk as "Spareier".

Reference

Harrison, James M. (1951) *A Series of Abnormal Eggs* Bull. B.O.C. 71: 43-45

A Defect of Musculature in a Fieldfare

by Dr. James M. Harrison

Received 6th December, 1954.

As, in my experience, gross anomalities of musculature in birds are rare the following instance of such a case in a Fieldfare, *Turdus pilaris* Linnæus, is worthy of note. The bird, an adult male, was obtained at Stone Street, near Sevenoaks, on November 19, 1954, and was brought to me for identification. On routine examination, it was found to have a defect causing a large depression of the lower and medial half of the left pectoralis major. The hollow is pyriform in shape and measures 30 mm. by 12 mm., the narrow end being directed downwards and inwards.

The cause of the condition would appear to be in the nature of a congenital malformation. This opinion is based upon a complete lack of evidence of any reparative process having occurred, such as would be found following an injury or an inflammatory lesion. The underlying sternum was quite normal, there is no scarring of the tissues, and the integument was nowhere adherent to underlying structures; nor was there any evidence of visceral damage or disease. The muscular rim of the depression was quite smooth and regular.

The condition would, in my opinion, have caused no impairment of function, as the main mass of the powerful pectoralis major was not involved. The rest of the musculature of the left pectoral girdle was quite normal.

A New Geographical Race of the Fiscal Shrike *Lanius collaris* Linnaeus from the Deserts of South-West Africa and Angola

by Mr. P. A. Clancey

Received 4th January, 1955

Study of the material of the Fiscal Shrike *Lanius collaris* Linnaeus from South-West Africa in the collections of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria, and the Museum Alexander Koenig, Bonn, has revealed that the populations resident in the desolate coastal desert, the Namib, and in the Kaokoveld and coastal desert areas of Angola differ significantly from *L. c. subcoronatus* Smith, 1841: Latakoo, *i.e.*, Kuruman, north-eastern Cape Province, the race with which they are generally associated. As they clearly warrant recognition as a distinct race, I propose to designate them.

Lanius collaris aridicolus, subsp. nov.

Type: ♂, adult. Swakopmund, Namib, South-West Africa. 29 June, 1932. Collected by R. D. Bradfield. In the collection of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria. T.M. No. 18648.

Description: Most closely allied to *L. c. subcoronatus* of the Orange River drainage but differs in being paler and greyer dorsally, less deep blackish slate, in fresh plumage, and in having the under-parts purer silky white, and by having more white in the tail. Differs from *L. c. capelli* (Bocage), 1879: Cassange, Angola (= *L. c. congicus* Reichenow *auctorum*) which replaces it to the northward, in being paler and greyer dorsally, having prominent white supercilia, and in possessing a much shorter, more rounded, tail, thus—14 specimens of *L. c. aridicolus* measure 96–107 mm. as against (109) 116–128 mm. in 14 specimens of *L. c. capelli*. Furthermore, in *L. c. capelli* the female rarely exhibits the least vestige of chestnut colour on the flanks, a sexual character which is always present in *L. c. aridicolus*.

Range: The most typical populations are found in the Mamib and associated deserts of northern South-West Africa, the Kaokoveld, and the coastal desert strip of south-western Angola, and in a less stable form (see "Remarks") from the Damaraland plateau and Ovamboland.

Material: L. c. aridicolus, 14; *L. c. subcoronatus*, 24; *L. c. collaris*, 103; *L. c. predator* Clancey, 35; *L. c. vigilans* Clancey, 40; *L. c. dominator* Clancey and Smithers, 36; *L. c. capelli*, 14; *L. c. marwitzi* Reichenow, 2; *L. c. tenuirectris* Clancey, 46; *L. c. humeralis* Stanley, 11; *L. c. smithii* (Fraser), 5.

Measurements of the Type: Wing (flattened) 98.5, culmen from base 21, tail 106 mm.

Remarks: L. c. aridicolus in its pure form is restricted to the excessively dry coastal deserts of South-West Africa and south-western Angola, an area renowned for its plethora of pallid avian and mammalian endemics. Localities from which I have examined typical specimens are: Walvis Bay, Swakopmund, Ugab and Huab Rivers, and Kamanjab. In the higher interior of Damaraland and in Ovamboland birds which are not just so intensely white ventrally occur, but for all practical taxonomic purposes they can be placed with the new race here described. Specimens from the

following localities have been studied: Uis, Naukluft, 10 km. west of Karibib, Okahandja, Windhoek, etc.

In the interior of Great Namaqualand the populations are darker dorsally and the under-parts are almost invariably vermiculated, and they are, in fact, inseparable from *L. c. subcoronatus* (specimens examined from Ariamsvlei, Maltahohe and Helmeringshausen).

I am grateful to Dr. G. Rudebeck, Ornithologist of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria, for the granting of facilities to study in great detail the magnificent material of the southern African *L. collaris* populations under his charge.

On the status of *Mirafra rufipilea* (Vieillot), N. Dict. d'Hist. Nat. 1, p. 345, 1816

by Captain C. H. B. Grant and Mr. C. W. Mackworth-Praed

Received 8th November, 1954

This name is founded on L'Alouette á callotte Rousse, Pl. 198, in Levaillant's Ois d'Afrique, 4, p. 135, 1805, who states that he found it in Great Namaqualand. This name is used by Sclater in his Syst. Av. Æthiop, 2, p. 313, 1924. Roberts, Bds. S. Afr., p. 195, 1940, places it under a separate heading and remarks that this bird has not since been obtained. Macdonald, *Ibis*, p. 629, 1952, discusses this name and on p. 634 places it as a race of *Mirafra apiata* Vieillot.

Our recent investigations into Levaillant's travels shows that he was in the localities where *Mirafra apiata* occurs from the Cape eastwards to Port Elizabeth and northwards to Little Namaqualand, but all the specimens known from those areas both in the British Museum and the Transvaal Museum are too heavily marked to agree with Levaillant's plate and description and do not have long hind claws. At no other locality on Levaillant's eastern journey could he have come across this Lark. In the country north of the Orange River, all birds are too pale for any of them to be Vieillot's *M. rufipilea*, and none agree with Levaillant's plate or description. The plate does agree in many respects (except for the hind claws which are described as very straight and measure on the plate 14.5 mm. against 6 to 8 mm. for *M. apiata*) with the bird that occurs in the Transvaal, northern Cape Province as far south as Victoria West and Deelfontein and the Orange Free State, but Levaillant was nowhere near Victoria West or Deelfontein. Maybe Vieillot's *M. rufipilea* will yet be re-discovered, though it appears doubtful, and meanwhile, we are of the opinion it should be considered as indeterminate.

Dr. Junge, of the Leiden Museum, under date 13th May, 1954, kindly informs us that the type is not in that Museum and there are no types from the Levaillant collection in the Paris Museum.

As *M. rufipilea* is indeterminate we have to consider the name that should be used for the bird that occurs in the Transvaal, northern Cape Province and Orange Free State.

Alauda pyrrhonota Vieillot, N. Dict. Hist. Nat. 1, p. 361, 1816, is a pipit. Sundevall, Oefv. K. Vet.-Akad. Förh., p. 99, 1851, gives *Alauda fasciolatus* for *Alauda pyrrhonota* Smith, Ill. Zool. 110, fig. 2, 1874, which he considered

to be pre-occupied by *Alauda pyrrhonota* Vieillot, 1816. Smith, however, gives *Brachyonyx pyrrhonotus* and as this is under a different genus, it is not a homonym. Smith's locality for his *B. pyrrhonotus* is "both coasts of Cape Colony" and this is therefore a synonym of *Mirafra apiata* Vieillot. Sundevall's *Alauda fasciolatus* is a new name for *Brachyonyx pyrrhonotus* Smith, which he misquoted as *Alauda pyrrhonotus*, and therefore also a synonym of *Mirafra apiata* Vieillot, and the locality "north of Potchefstroom" as given by Gyldenstolpe in *Ibis*, p. 290, 1934, for *M. fasciolatus* has no standing.

Roberts, Ann. Trans. Mus. 11, p. 223, 1926, gave *Megalophonus hewitti* (= *Mirafra hewitti*) for the bird occurring in the Transvaal, north-eastern Cape Province and Orange Free State, and this should be accepted for the bird previously known as *M. rufipilea*.

We have to thank Dr. Junge for information on the type of *M. apiata* and Mr. Gustaf Rudebeck of the Transvaal Museum, for details of the specimens of *M. apiata* in that museum.

Examples of clutch size of Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra* (Linnaeus) Magpie *Pica pica* (Linnaeus), Linnet *Carduelis cannabina* (Linnaeus) and Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra* Linnaeus in the area of Brindisi

by Mr. R. G. Finnis

Received 22nd November, 1954

The following examples of clutch size are submitted from notes made during the spring of 1944 from a limited area of land bordering cultivation. The nests were discovered casually; the coarse vegetation providing particular attractions for the Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*.

Calandra Lark—M. calandra.

May 30th, one nest containing six eggs. (On May 28th, one fully-fledged young was found.)

Magpie—P. pica.

April 12th, an undomed nest containing six fresh eggs was found: one egg was taken. On April 16th, there were again six eggs. (A clutch of seven fresh eggs taken on April 22nd in Albania is mentioned by C. B. Ticehurst and H. Whistler—*Ibis*, 1932–33).

Linnet—C. cannabina.

One nest found on June 1st, contained six eggs, five of these hatched on June 3rd.

Corn Bunting—E. calandra.

May 12th—one nest of five eggs	(These had disappeared by May 18th).
May 19th— „ „ „ „ „	(This nest was empty on June 2nd)
May 22nd— „ „ „ six „	(These hatched May 26th and five days later four young were presumed to have been taken by a Kestrel).

May 24th— „ „ „ „ „ (These had disappeared by May 30th).
June 1st— „ „ „ five „ (Hatched June 5th).
June 3rd— „ „ „ „ „
June 3rd— „ „ „ six „
June 21st— „ „ „ five „

I was unable to associate so many nest failures of the Corn Bunting with any specific predator, with the exception of the Kestrel mentioned above on circumstantial evidence, but the large number of snakes and situation of nests—all within eighteen inches of the ground—indicated a possible cause.

A new race of Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* Linnaeus from the Cape Verde Islands

by Dr. W. R. P. Bourne

Received 22nd December, 1954

When he was collecting in the islands Boyd Alexander ("Ibis" (7) 4: 277) reported a difference in size between the kestrels from the north-western and south-western islands. When Murphy (Bull. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., 94: 211) reviewed the birds of the group he had insufficient material to test this assertion, though he gives the dimensions of some birds from the islands. Bannerman (The Birds of Tropical West Africa, 1930–1951) was unable to detect any difference between the birds of different islands, but the measurements he quotes suggest that he only considered birds from the southern islands. I have recently received a list of birds collected in the islands by the "Blossom" South Atlantic expedition deposited in the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Ohio. The birds in this collection from the northern islands of S. Antão, S. Vincete, S. Nicolau, and Sal are referred to the endemic race *Falco tinnunculus neglectus* Schlegel from S. Vicente; the birds from the southern islands of Boavista, Maio, S. Thiego, and Brava to some unspecified form differing from *Falco neglectus*. I have therefore examined the birds in the British Museum of Natural History to see if there is any difference between the population of different islands.

I found, when in the islands, that the birds of S. Vicente and S. Thiego differed in the field, those of S. Thiego appearing larger and more richly coloured, and frequenting the towns and cultivated areas to a greater extent. The small series taken by Alexander confirms this difference, the birds of the northern islands being smaller and more heavily marked on a paler ground. The difference in size is present in both sexes:

Origin: males	*Number*	*Wing*	*Tail*	*Tarsus*	*Culmen*
S. Antao, S.Vicente Raza, S. Nicolao	7	190–209 (198)	117–138 (127)	38–42 (40)	21–24 (21)
S. Thiego and Maio	8	209–229 (218)	137–149 (141)	38–45 (40)	21–23 (22)
Females					
S. Antao, S. Vicente Raza, S. Nicolau	5	203–213 (208)	131–142 (138)	39–42 (40)	22–24 (23)
S. Thiego and Maio	5	224–232 (228)	149–162 (154)	39–41 (40)	22–26 (24)

The birds from the inner islands resemble *F. t. carlo* from tropical east Africa and *F. t. canariensis* from the outer Canary islands in their measurements, but they are more heavily marked than *F. t. carlo* and darker than *F. t. canariensis*, while they are larger and darker but less heavily marked than *F. t. neglectus*. I propose to describe them as a new race:

Falco tinnunculus alexandri new race

Description: An intermediate form, similar in measurements to *F. t. carlo* and *F. t. canariensis*, but darker and more heavily streaked above and below than *F. t. canariensis*, and paler and much more heavily barred and streaked above and below than *F. t. carlo*, larger and darker and more rufous on the back, but less heavily streaked and barred above and below than *F. t. neglectus*. The sexes show parallel variations; measurements above.

Type: British Museum Registered Number 1911.12.23.470, an adult male taken on S. Thiego in the Cape Verde Islands by Boyd Alexander on 1 December, 1897 (''Ibis'', (7) 4: 277). Measurements of type, culmen 21.5 mm., wing 220 mm., tail 148 mm., tarsus 39 mm.

Distribution: S. Thiego and Maio, and probably Fogo, Brava, and Boavista in the Cape Verde Islands.

Remarks: The forms of *Falco tinnunculus* found in the Atlantic Islands become progressively smaller, more heavily streaked, barred on the tail, and less rufous on the back towards the south-west, forming a stepped cline through *F. t. dacotiae* of the eastern Canaries, *F. t. canariensis* of the western Canaries, and *F. t. alexandri* of the south-eastern Cape Verde Islands to *F. t. neglectus* of the north-western Cape Verde Islands. *F. t. neglectus* and *F. t. alexandri* of the Cape Verde Islands bear the same relation to each other in that group that *F. t. canariensis* and *F. t. dacotiae* bear to each other in the Canaries, but both forms are more heavily marked, while the differences in size as opposed to colour are reversed. The range of *F. t. neglectus* is now restricted to S. Antão, S. Vicente, Raza, and S. Nicolau, and possibly Sal in the Cape Verde Islands.

The type locality of *Pelagodroma marina eadesi* Bourne

by Dr. W. R. P. Bourne

Received 22nd December, 1954.

When I made Cima the type locality of this race (Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, 73 (1953): 79) I overlooked the fact that the type is labelled ''Rhombos Id., Brava''. Cima is that one of several Rhombos Islands near Brava on which the type was taken, as the account quoted in the description shows.

Some Unusual Plumage Aberrations in the Great Tit, *Parus major* Linnaeus

by Mr. Bryan L. Sage

Received 18th January, 1955

In my note on this subject (*antea* 75: 4), the first record quoted refers to a bird obtained at Wilmington, Yorkshire. This is an error, the specimen was in fact obtained at Wilmington, near Eastbourne, Sussex (see *A History of Sussex Birds* by G. Walpole-Bond, 1: 291).

I am indebted to Mr. I. G. Ferguson-Lees for drawing my attention to this error.

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March Meeting with B.O.U., 19th April, 17th May, 20th September, 18th October, 15th November, 13th December.

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The five hundred and thirty-eighth meeting was held jointly with the B.O.U. at the offices of the Zoological Society of London, at Regents Park, on Tuesday, 15th March.

Chairman: DR. W. H. THORPE.

Members present: B.O.U. 40; B.O.C. 41; Guests 40; Total 121.

Notes on a collection from Central Szechuan

by MRS. B. P. HALL

Received 26th February, 1955.

In 1939, the British Museum (Natural History) received a collection of four hundred and eight birds, made in the previous year by the late Mr. Floyd Tangier-Smith in Szechuan, when he was collecting Giant Pandas for the Zoological Society of London. Tangier-Smith, unfortunately, died soon after his return from China, leaving the collection labelled with dates, and with village names or localities in Chinese characters. Through the kindness of Mrs. Hickman, Miss Mabel Wallis, the Rev. J. R. Sinton, and the Rev. T. Cook, all recently of the China Inland Mission, it has been possible to translate the labels and to trace the areas in which Tangier-Smith collected. Some names are of well-known localities and the position of other places can be determined from the dates within fairly narrow limits. It is evident that in March and early May, 1938, he made small collections around the towns of Kiating and Chengtu. From 25th May to 26th July he was at, or not more than one day's journey from, the village of Ts'ao P'o in the Wasu Hills (lat. 31° 18′N.: long. 103° 15′E.); from 27th July to 27th August he was at or near the village of T'ao Kwan on the Si-ho river, about ten miles due east of Ts'ao P'o; from 29th August to 24th September, he was at or near the town of Kwanhsien (lat. 31°N.: long. 103° 32′E.). It seems worthwhile to record this now, together with information on some of the more interesting specimens obtained, since the untimely death of the collector and the outbreak of war prevented work being done on the collection at a time when full details of his journeys might still have been available.

Ninety different species are represented in the collection, mostly passerines and a few small non-passerines, since Tangier-Smith brought these back by air: a consignment of larger birds dispatched from Szechuan for return by sea was unfortunately, but, in view of the Japanese invasion of China, not surprisingly, lost in transit. The only large birds brought back

are three fine males of the rare *Lophophorus l'huysii* from the Ts'ao P'o area.

Other species represented that appear to be interesting are:

Ninox scutulata (Raffles). Kiating (March), near Kwanhsien (Sept. 5). These three birds match the nominate race rather than the greyer *N. s. burmanica* Hume. I can find no other record of this species in Szechuan, and these may be migrants.

Dendrocopus leucotos (Bechstein). Ts'ao P'o area (June 30), a young male. This is another species of which I can find no record in Szechuan. The young bird is fully grown and matches adults of the east China race *D. l. fohkiensis* (Buturlin) in the heavy streaking on the sides of the breast and thighs, though it lacks the pink wash on the centre of the abdomen.

Urocissa erythrorhynchus (Gmelin). Ts'ao P'o (May 25, June 10). These two specimens and others in the British Museum from northern Szechuan and Ichang seem to fit best with the paler northern race *U. e. brevivexilla* Swinhoe.

Pteruthius erythropterus (Linnaeus). Kwanhsien (Sept. 12). It is noticeable that in this male and in three others from northern Yunnan there is only a faint indication of the thin white line dividing the black of the head from the grey of the neck, which is characteristic of the type and most Yunnan specimens of *P. e. yunnanensis* Ticehurst. It seems that the white line is a variable character less pronounced in the north of the range of the race.

Enicurus schistaceus Hodgson. Kwanhsien area (Sept. 6, 7). These two are the first Szechuan specimens of the Slaty-backed Forktail in the British Museum.

Lanius schach Linnaeus. Kiating (March), Ts'ao P'o (May 29). These shrikes are interesting since the Kiating winter bird is *L. s. nipalensis* Hodgson, and the two Ts'ao P'o summer birds are *L. s. schach.* Olivier (Monogr. des Pies-Grieches du Genre Lanius, 1944, p. 210) does not include Szechuan in the range of *L. s. nipalensis.*

Lanius cristatus Linnaeus. Ts'ao P'o (May 25–June 3). These four birds, similar in all repsects to *L. c. lucionensis* (Bogdanow) of eastern China, can be assumed to be breeding at these dates. Schäfer (Journ. f. Orn. 1938, Sonderheft, p. 251) records this race as a rare breeder in sub-tropical Szechuan though Olivier (op. cit. p. 74) does not.

Emberiza cia Linnaeus. Ts'ao P'o and T'ao Kwan areas (May 28–Aug. 26). This series of eighteen birds matches the Tibetan race *E. c. khamensis* Suskin rather than the paler *E. c. omissa* Rothschild of Kansu and Shensi, or the more rufous *E. c. yunnanensis* Sharpe. There is, however, a single specimen in the British Museum of *E. c. omissa* taken in November at Weichow, about 30 miles north of T'ao Kwan, which indicates some seasonal movement in western China.

A Review of the Races of Barratt's Scrub-Warbler *Bradypterus barratti* Sharpe of South Africa

By Mr. P. A. Clancey

Received 5th February, 1955.

Barratt's Scrub-Warbler *Bradypterus barratti* Sharpe is confined to eastern and south-eastern South Africa and eastern Southern Rhodesia,

with a closely allied form, *Bradypterus mariae* Madarász (perhaps conspecific) and its races, in Tanganyika Territory and Nyasaland and adjacent regions. The species is an inhabitant of dense scrub and tangles in wooded kloofs and on the edges of forests, and owing to the impenetrable nature of its haunts and secretive habits it is seldom collected or recorded. As recently as 1930, Sclater, "Systema Avium Aethiopicarum", part ii, p. 511, recorded its range as "Transvaal and Natal", but it is now known to occur in suitable localities from at least the Albany district of the eastern Cape Province, Pondoland, and East Griqualand to Natal, Zululand, Swaziland, eastern and northern Transvaal, and the eastern highlands of Southern Rhodesia and immediately contiguous parts of southern Portuguese East Africa.

B. barratti has been split by workers into several races, some of which are clearly based on very tenuous grounds indeed and on most unsatisfactory material. *B. b. barratti* Sharpe, 1876: Macamac, Transvaal; *B. b. godfreyi* (Roberts), 1922: Pirie, eastern Cape Province; *B. b. major* (Roberts), 1922: Wakkerstroom, south-eastern Transvaal; *B. b. wilsoni* Roberts, 1933: Kloof, Natal; *B. b. priesti* Benson, 1946: Vumba, eastern Southern Rhodesia; and *B. b. cathkinensis* Vincent, 1948: Giant's Castle Game Reserve, Natal, are the races proposed by workers. Sclater, *loc. cit.*, recognises no races of *B. barratti, sens. strict.*, rejecting the claims of Roberts' two races proposed in 1922; Roberts, "Birds of South Africa", 1940, pp. 253, 255, upholds the validity of all four races described up to the year 1933; Mackworth-Praed and Grant, in Vincent, "Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club," vol. 69, 2, 1948, p. 19, discuss the races of *B. barratti* on the basis of the limited material in the British Museum (Nat. Hist.), rejecting *B. b. wilsoni* of Natal, which is placed as a synonym of *B. b. barratti* of the eastern and northern Transvaal, at the same time recognising a new race from the Natal escarpment of the Drakensberg massif, *i.e.*, *B. b. cathkinensis*, described by Vincent in the same paper; Vincent ,"Check List of the Birds of South Africa", 1952, pp. 78, 79, following Mackworth-Praed and Grant, recognises all races proposed with the exception of *B. b. wilsoni*; Clancey, "Preliminary List of the Birds of Natal and Zululand", 1953, p. 43, in recognising *B. b. major*, *B. b. wilsoni* and *B. b. cathkinensis*, has drawn attention to the confused state of the ranges of the races occurring at least in Natal and Zululand.

Through the kind co-operation of the Directors of the museums listed below it has recently been possible to examine virtually all available study skins of *B. barratti* preserved in South African collections, and I have arrived at the conclusion that the species has been somewhat oversplit, especially in the southern sector of its range. Only four of the six races proposed seem to warrant recognition, now that a reasonably adequate material has been assembled and studied collectively. The following museums have loaned or made material available for this revision: Albany Museum, Grahamstown (1); Durban Museum (3); Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg (3); Transvaal Museum, Pretoria (26).

Originally made known to science in the year 1876 from material collected at Macamac, *i.e.*, Mac Mac alluvial diggings, farm Gelhoutboom No. 220, Pilgrims Rest District, Transvaal (altitude c. 5000′ a.s.l.), *B. b.*

barratti Sharpe still remains little known. Material of this race is limited, and that in South African collections consists of some four specimens collected about 100 miles to the north of the type-locality at Woodbush (altitude c. 4500′ a.s.l.), and now in the collection of the Transvaal Museum. Birds of the nominate race have the upper-parts dark reddish olivaceous brown, most red on the rump, and on the ventral surfaces the throat spotting extends well on to the breast and in some on to the flanks. The under-parts have the ground colour of the breast and sides of the body cast with buffish, and the flanks are warm olivaceous brown. The wings of 3 ♂♂ and 1 ♀ measure 61–64.5, the tails 65–71 mm. *B. b. barratti* is apparently confined to the forested and bushy parts of the eastern and northern Transvaal, but little is known of its distribution.

To the north of the range of *B. b. barratti*, in the eastern highlands of Southern Rhodesia, occurs a closely allied group of populations which has recently been studied by Benson, *vide* "Ostrich", vol. xvii, 3, 1946, pp. 197–199. Of these populations I have examined seven specimens collected in the Vumba highlands, Umtali district (altitude 4000′–5500′ a.s.l.), by Benson (*Type* and four paratypes of *B. b. priesti*) and in adjacent Portuguese East African territory by P. A. Sheppard. Viewed in series, material from the Vumba highlands agrees well dorsally with *B. b. barratti*, but on the ventral surfaces the throat spots are seen to be restricted and are not diffused over the breast and on to the flanks as in the nominate subspecies, while the abdominal areas exhibit a greater measure of white—an impression no doubt intensified by the absence of the buffish cast to the ventral plumage present in *B. b. barratti*. There is no difference in size: wings of 5 ♂♂ and 2 ♀♀ 60.5–65, tails 65–71 mm. For these clearly separable populations Benson, *loc. cit.*, has proposed the name *B. b. priesti*.

To the immediate south of the known range of *B. b. barratti*, in the south-eastern parts of the Transvaal, occur further populations worthy of critical consideration. Roberts, "Annals of the Transvaal Museum", vol. viii, 4, 1922, pp. 234, 235, has shown, on the basis of a series from Walkerstroom and Volksrust, that the populations of the Drakensberg range on the Natal–Transvaal border are racially separable from the nominotypical race by their greater size (wings of 4 ♂♂ and 1 ♀ 65–69, tails 69–77 mm.), paler, less rufous, upper-parts, paler ventral surfaces, and restricted throat spotting (as in *B. b. priesti*.) For these populations, Roberts has proposed the name *B. b. major*, the *Type* being from Wakkerstroom. The range of this race is very imperfectly known, but would appear to be the montane scrub-forests of the south-eastern Transvaal and Natal–Transvaal border country. Roberts, *loc. cit.*, and in his book (p. 255), extends the range of *B. b. major* to the Natal escarpment of the Drakensberg massif, far to the south-west, on the basis of a single ♂ from Giant's Castle Game Reserve (altitude 7000′ a.s.l.) in the Transvaal Museum (wing 66, tail 72.5 mm.). While agreeing in size with those from Wakkerstroom and Volksrust in the same collection, the specimen in question and another ♂ from the same locality in the collection of the Natal Museum (wing 65.5, tail 76.5 mm.) are darker above and on the sides of the body and flanks and are clearly not the same as *B. b. major*, which would appear to have the more restricted range given above.

The two dark and richly coloured specimens from Giant's Castle

Game Reserve just discussed are exact topotypes of *B. b. cathkinensis* Vincent, 1948, believed by its describer to differ from the populations found at lower altitudes in Natal by being darker dorsally and having the flank colouration olivaceous grey and not olivaceous brown. The discrimination of two races in western and southern Natal is open to question on theoretical grounds alone, but when considered in the absence of any obvious physical barrier which would impede or prevent gene-flow, and a more or less continuous distribution from sea-level to considerable altitudes in the same drainage system, it becomes additionally difficult to concede the possibility that two taxonomically distinguishable groups of populations of this localized scrub-warbler could occur in the small area concerned. Examination of a series of specimens from widely separated localities in Natal (Giant's Castle Game Reserve, Pinetown, Kloof), Zululand (Ingwavuma, Lebombo Mountains), and Pondoland (Mzamba, Mntafufu River, Port St. Johns, Lombazi) shows conclusively that only one race inhabits this entire region. Critical study of this material has failed to reveal any significant and constant difference between the birds of the Natal escarpment of the Drakensberg massif (topotypical *B. b. cathkinensis*) and those from the coastal districts of the province (topotypical *B. b. wilsoni*), and I can only conclude that the specimens of both *B. b. barratti* and *B. b. wilsoni* in the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) collection are seriously "foxed", and that the differences indicated by Mackworth-Praed and Grant are the result of comparing fresh specimens with material affected by post mortem cabinet colour change. Specimens obtained this year (1954) are infinitely darker dorsally, less reddish, and greyer below than examples of the same race obtained forty years ago. I have therefore reluctantly concluded that *B. b. cathkinensis* (1948) cannot be maintained on any character and is a synonym of *B. b. wilsoni* (1933). Mackworth-Praed and Grant have placed *B. b. wilsoni* as a synonym of *B. b. barratti*, but this would not appear to be correct. The material available to me of the two races concerned indicates that *B. b. wilsoni* is darker above, less tinged with rufous, than *B. b. barratti*, and the ventral spotting is restricted to the lower throat, while the flank colouration is slightly darker. There is also a well-marked tendency to greater size: wings of 7 ♂♂ and 5 ♀♀ 63–67, tails 68–81 mm.

Roberts, *loc. cit.*, 1922, has separated the populations of the eastern Cape Province (Albany District) under the name *B. b. godfreyi*. This is the most imperfectly known of any of the proposed races of *B. barratti* and is based on extremely unsatisfactory grounds. The only adult specimen in the Transvaal Museum is a former, faded mount (♂ adult. Grahamstown, December, 1896, *ex.* Albany Museum), which, making allowances for its present condition, agrees well with those from Pondoland, Natal and Zululand before me. Through the kindness of Dr. J. Hewitt, Director of the Albany Museum, I have been able to examine the *Type* of *B. b. godfreyi*. I find that it is not a fully adult bird, still showing some of the yellowish juvenal feathering abdominally, and the remarkably short tail (61 mm.) is also of the juvenal plumage. The specimen is seriously "foxed" and stained on the throat, and is in a lamentably poor state. Making due allowance for its present condition, I cannot see that the *Type* of *B. b. godfreyi* is appreciably different to material of the populations referred

above to *B. b. wilsoni*, and this, coupled with the abysmally inadequate material of *B. b. godfreyi* available in all museums (1 study skin, 1 former mount, 3 juveniles (flat)), indicates that it would be of no advantage whatever to recognise at the present time an eastern Cape race as different to the one occurring immediately to the north-east. Pending an appraisal based on freshly collected material of the eastern Cape race of Roberts, I propose to recognise only one subspecies as ranging from the Albany and adjacent districts of the eastern Cape to Pondoland, East Griqualand, Natal (except Transvaal border country) and Zululand under the earliest name available for it, namely, *B. b. godfreyi* (Roberts), 1922, placing *B. b. wilsoni* Roberts, 1933, and *B. b. cathkinensis* Vincent, 1948, as synonyms of it.

It can be concluded that geographical variation in *B. barratti* is poorly developed, only four of the six races proposed justifying nomenclatural recognition. The nomenclature, criteria and ranges of the races herein recognised are as follows:

1. *Bradypterus barratti barratti* Sharpe.

   Bradypterus barratti Sharpe, "Ibis", 1876, p. 53: Macamac, *i.e.*, Mac Mac alluvial diggings, farm Gelhoutboom No. 220, Pilgrims Rest district, eastern Transvaal, South Africa.

   Upper-parts, wings and tail reddish olivaceous brown, most red on rump. Ventral surfaces with throat spotting extending well on to breast and in some on to flanks; flanks warm olivaceous brown; entire undersurface with buffish cast to ground colour. Wings (flattened) 61–64.5 (63.1), tails 65–71 (66.6) mm. (Four specimens examined).

   Type: In the British Museum (Nat. Hist.), London. B.M. Reg. No. 1875.10.7.39.

   Range: Known only from certain districts in the eastern and northern Transvaal (Pilgrims Rest, Woodbush).

2. *Bradypterus barratti priesti* Benson.

   Bradypterus (*Caffrillas*) *barratti priesti* Benson, "Ostrich", vol. xviii, 3, 1946, p. 197: Vumba, Umtali, eastern Southern Rhodesia, at 5500′ a.s.l.

   Similar to *B. b. barratti* but differs in having the throat spotting restricted and not extending on to the breast and flanks; more extensive white on abdominal surfaces, and flanks darker; ventral surface without buffish cast. Wings (flattened) 60–5–65 (63.8), tails 65–71 (68.7) mm. (Seven specimens examined).

   Type: In the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria. T.M. No. 25826.

   Range: Confined to the forests of the eastern highlands of Southern Rhodesia and adjacent districts of Portuguese East Africa.

3. *Bradypterus barratti major* (Roberts).

   Caffrillas barratti major Roberts, "Annals of the Transvaal Museum", vol. viii, 4, 1922, p. 234: Wakkerstroom, south-eastern Transvaal, South Africa.

   Paler and more olivaceous dorsally than *B. b. barratti*, the rump less red. Under-parts paler, whiter over all, and with the sides of the body, flanks and under tail-coverts appreciably lighter; throat spotting restricted (as in *B. b. priesti*). Larger. Wings (flattened) 65–69 (66.6), tails 69–77 (73.1) mm. (Five specimens examined).

Type: In the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria. T.M. No. 6869.

Range: Known only from the highland scrub-forests in the south eastern Transvaal and on the Transvaal–Natal border (Wakkerstroom and Volksrust are localities).

Map showing the approximate ranges of the four recognisable races of Barratt's Scrub-Warbler *Bradypterus barratti* Sharpe.

1. *Bradypterus barratti priesti* Benson.
2. *Bradypterus barratti barratti* Sharpe.
3. *Bradypterus barratti major* (Roberts).
4. *Bradypterus barratti godfreyi* (Roberts)

4. *Bradypterus barratti godfreyi* (Roberts).

Caffrillas barratti godfreyi Roberts, "Annals of the Transvaal Museum", vol. viii, 4, 1922, p. 234: Pirie, eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Synonyms: *Bradypterus* (*Caffrillas*) *barratti wilsoni* Roberts, "Annals of the Transvaal Museum", vol. xv, 2, 1933, p. 271: Kloof, Natal; *Bradypterus barratti cathkinensis* Vincent, "Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club", vol. 69, 2, 1948, p. 18: near Cathkin Peak and the Mahlabachaneng Pass, Giant's Castle Game Reserve, Natal, at 7000′ a.s.l.

Similar above to *B. b. barratti* but usually slightly darker and with less reddish on the rump; wings and tail also darker, less reddish. On underparts colder and rather greyer with little or no buffish wash; flank

colouration darker; throat spotting as in *B. b. major* and *B. b. priesti*. Larger than *B. b. barratti*. Wings (flattened) 62–67 (64.6), tails 66–81 (72.6) mm. (Seventeen specimens examined).

Types: B. b. godfreyi: In the Albany Museum, Grahamstown. A.M. No. 1695. *B. b. wilsoni:* In the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria. T.M. No. 18420. *B. b. cathkinensis:* In the British Museum (Nat. Hist.), London. B.M. Reg. No. 1948.39.8.

Range: From the eastern Cape Province (Albany district) to Pondoland, East Griqualand, Natal (except Transvaal border country), north-eastern Zululand and adjacent areas of Swaziland and extreme southern Portuguese East Africa.

The gender of Zosterops

by Dr. D. W. Snow and Mr. R. E. Moreau

Received 26th February, 1955

In the course of writing a paper, one of us (R. E. M.) has recently been forced to decide whether the generic name *Zosterops*, and with it *Speirops* and *Malacirops*, should be treated as masculine or feminine. Swainson, who in 1838 seems to have been the first author to use it with a specific name which changed with gender, treated it as feminine, as have most other authors, while Reichenow was inconsistent. Sclater (*Systema Avium Aethiopicarum*, 1930) treated it as masculine, stating in a footnote (p. 673): "The gender of *Zosterops* (from *'ωψ* [sic], an eye) is masculine". This however is not so; *ὤψ* is normally feminine, like most other nouns with the same ending (see Liddell and Scott). (There are three Greek words which in English would be written "ops": *ὄψ*, eye, face (rare); *ὄψ*, voice; *ὤψ* (Greek long o), eye, face. All are poetical words; none is ever used in the nominative forms *ὄψ* and *ὤψ*, which are, as it were, theoretical extrapolations.)

The question of the gender of adjectival compounds of the type of *Zosterops* ("girdle-faced" or "girdle-eyed"), formed by an adjective and noun or by two nouns, has been fully discussed by Grensted (*Ent. Monthly Mag.*, 80, 229–233, 1944), referring particularly to *Chrysops* ("golden-eyed"). In his view they should, on philological grounds, be regarded as adjectives; consequently they would have no gender of their own and should be treated as masculine. But he recognized that this would lead to confusion, and left the question open to discussion. More recently, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature has recommended (Copenhagen, 1953) that generic names of this sort take the gender of the noun with which they end, giving as an example that genera ending in -ops * and -opsis are feminine. If this recommendation is followed it will make for stability, since the genders of the great majority of Greek and Latin words are not in doubt. In view of Sclater's definite statement it thus seems worth while to emphasize that on all grounds, except possibly the purely philological, *Zosterops* should be treated as feminine.

* But not *Merops*, which appears in texts as a masculine noun (*μέροψ*), and does not seem to have any connexion with the above roots.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

FINANCE

The Accounts of the Club for the year ended 31st December, 1954 are presented herewith. They show an excess of income over expenditure of £85 6s. 7d., which, together with the amount of £61 8s. 1d. received from sales of the "*Bulletin*" for previous years, gives a surplus for the year of £146 14s. 8d.

This is the first year to show the full benefit of the re-arrangements made in connection with printers and separates during 1953, which accounts for the material increase in excess of income.

The receipts from the sale of old "*Bulletins*" must be regarded as exceptional, as Mr. Coombes was successful in obtaining one order for £55 and this is not likely to occur every year.

During the year the holding of £250 2½% Savings Bonds 1964/67 was sold resulting in a surplus of £20 12s. 4d. which has been carried to the Accumulated Fund. The proceeds of sale were invested in 3½% Defence Bonds.

A new Bell and Howell Projector was purchased during the year, which, with accessories, amounted to £124 13s. 0d.; £25 was allowed for the old machine, leaving a net cost of £99 13s. 0d. This has been written down to £1 so that future years will not be burdened with any depreciation.

The old Projector cost £56. It was used 10 times. Had one been hired on each occasion, it would have cost the Club £37 10s. 0d. After allowing for the amount of £25 received on its sale, it will be seen that the Club has not suffered any loss on that machine.

GENERAL

Meetings.

The Club held nine meetings during the year, of which two were in conjunction with the British Ornithologists' Union. There was a further drop in attendances from 527 to 424, an average of 47 members at each meeting. It is proposed to recommend to members that the June meeting should in future be replaced by a meeting in September.

BRITISH ORNIT

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR T

1953 £	EXPENDITURE	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
	"Bulletin" Vol. 74:		
	Cost of publication, distribution, including Editor's		
291	Expenses	222 7 3	
48	*Less* Sales	64 14 2	
243			157 13 1
20	Notices for Meetings, etc.		23 14 8
	Postages, Projectionist, and Miscellaneous Expendi-		
38	ture		32 11 8
5	Contribution "Zoological Record"		5 5 0
306			219 4 5
15	Balance, Excess of Income over Expenditure, carried down		85 6 7
£321			£304 11 0
42	Surplus for the year carried to Accumulated Fund ..		146 14 8
£42			£146 14 8

BALANCE SHEET

£		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
	ACCUMULATED FUND:		
	As at 31st December, 1953	1170 0 9	
	Add: Surplus Income for year	146 14 8	
	Surplus on Sale of Investments	20 12 4	
		1337 7 9	
	Less: Written-off cost of Projector	99 13 0	
1170			1237 14 9
	BULLETIN FUND:		
73	As at 31st December, 1953		72 18 3
36	SUBSCRIPTIONS 1955 paid in advance		43 13 6
17	SUNDRY CREDITORS		17 11 6
£1296			£1371 18 0

We have examined the above Balance Sheet and Income and Expendi
accordance therewith, and in our opinion correct.

FINSBURY CIRCUS HOUSE,
BLOMFIELD STREET, LONDON, E.C.2.
2nd March, 1955.

OGISTS' CLUB

ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1954

1953 £		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
	INCOME		
	SUBSCRIPTIONS:		
198	185 Members	194 5 0	
14	14 Associates	14 14 0	
51	Income Tax recovered under Deed of Covenant ..	53 8 0	
263			262 7 0
	Entrance Fees:		
18	6 Members	6 0 0	
3	1 Associate	1 0 0	
			7 0 0
37	Investment Income		35 4 0
£321			£304 11 0
15	Excess of Income over Expenditure, brought down		85 6 7
27	Sales of "Bulletin" for previous years, *less* Expenses		61 8 1
£42			£146 14 8

31st DECEMBER 1954

£		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
	INVESTMENTS, at cost:		
	£930 3½% Defence Bonds	930 0 0	
	£100 3% Savings Bonds 1960/70	100 0 0	
1011			1030 0 0
	(Market Value of all securities at date £1026)		
	PROJECTOR, LANTERN AND SCREEN		
	As at 31st December, 1953	1 0 0	
	Add: Cost of New Projector	124 13 0	
		125 13 0	
	Less: Sale of Old Projector	25 0 0	
		100 13 0	
	Less: Amount written off	99 13 0	
1			1 0 0
1	STOCK OF "BULLETIN" NOMINAL VALUE		1 0 0
5	SUNDRY DEBTORS		2 0 10
278	CASH AT BANK		337 17 2
£1296			£1371 18 0

R. MEINERTZHAGEN, *Chairman.*
C. N. WALTER, *Hon. Treasurer.*

nt with the books and records of the club and certify them to be in

W. B. KEEN & CO.,
Chartered Accountants,
Hon. Auditors.

Membership

The Committee very much regret to record the death during 1954 of Mrs. W. W. Naumburg and Mr. B. B. Riviere. Seven new members and one associate member were elected and six members resigned, leaving the total membership unchanged at 199.

The "Bulletin"

The transfer of printing and distribution to the Caxton & Holmesdale Press (Sevenoaks) Limited, has been accompanied by a substantial saving in costs and a much improved service, thanks to close co-operation between the Editor and the printers.

Outside subscriptions to the "Bulletin" increased again to 70. A List of Members was printed with Volume 74.

Acknowledgments.

We should like to thank Mr. Gaffney for his excellent handling of the projector and lantern, Lt.-Cmdr. C. P. Staples for his assistance, and Messrs. W. B. Keen & Co. for acting as Honorary Auditors.

R. MEINERTZHAGEN,

Chairman.

15th February, 1955

SPECIAL NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Black and White Illustrations

The Committee have decided that in future the Club will pay for a reasonable number of black and white blocks at the discretion of the Editor. If the contributor wishes to have the blocks to keep for his own use afterwards, the Club will not charge for them, as has been done in the past.

BACK NUMBERS OF THE "BULLETIN"

Back numbers of the "Bulletin" can be obtained at 2/6 each. Applications should be made to R. A. H. Coombes, Esq., Zoological Museum, Tring, Herts. No reply will be sent if parts are not available.

Members who have back numbers of the "Bulletin" which they no longer require, are requested to kindly send them to R. A. H. Coombes, Esq., as above.

DINNERS AND MEETINGS FOR 1955

19th April, 17th May, 20th September, 18th October, 15th November, 13th December.

SEPARATES

Contributors who desire free copies of the Bulletin containing their notes should state so on their MS., otherwise these will not be ordered. These will be supplied up to a maximum of fifty.

PUBLICATION OF THE "BULLETIN"

Members who make a contribution at a Meeting should hand the MS. to the Editor at that Meeting. As the proofs will be corrected by the Editor, it is essential that the MS. should be correct and either typed or written very clearly with scientific and place names in block letters. The first mention of a scientific name should be spelt out in full, i.e., genus, specific name, racial name (if any), and author. Any further mention of the same name need only have the initial letter of the genus and no further mention of the author.

If no MS. is handed to the Editor at the Meeting, a note will be inserted mentioning the contribution.

BLACK AND WHITE ILLUSTRATIONS

The Committee have decided that in future the Club will pay for a reasonable number of black and white blocks at the discretion of the Editor. If the contributor wishes to have the blocks to keep for his own use afterwards, the Club will not charge for them, as has been done in the past.

Communications are not restricted to members of the British Ornithologists' Club, and contributions up to 1,500 words on taxonomy and related subjects will be considered from all who care to send them to The Editor, Dr. J. G. Harrison, "Merriewood", St. Botolph's Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Communications relating to other matters should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, N. J. P. Wadley, Esq., 14 Elm Place, London, S.W.7.

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BULLETIN

OF THE

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

Edited by
DR. JEFFERY HARRISON

Volume 75
No. 5

May
1955

BRITISH MUSEUM (NATURAL HISTORY)

BULLETIN
OF THE
BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

Volume 75
Number 5
Published: 5th May, 1955

Annual General Meeting

Chairman: COLONEL R. MEINERTZHAGEN

The Sixty-third Annual General Meeting of the Club was held at 5.45 p.m. on Tuesday, 19th April, 1955, at the Rembrandt Hotel, Thurloe Place, London, S.W.7.

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on the 20th April, 1954, were passed.

The Report and Accounts for the year to 31st December, 1954, were considered and passed unanimously. Mr. C. N. Walter explained that though there was a surplus of income for 1954, there would be increased expenditure in 1955, due to (*a*) an increase in the cost of printing, (*b*) the larger number of copies voted to authors, and (*c*) the decision of the Committee to allow authors more than one block. At the same time, he pointed out that the Commissioners of Inland Revenue had again warned him that the freedom from taxation was contended, and only valid from year to year.

The following alterations to the Rules were passed unanimously:

RULE 6.—*To cancel the June meeting in future, and substitute it by a meeting in September.*

RULE 10.—*To issue authors with* 50 *copies of the* "BULLETIN" *instead of* 6 *free separates.*

It was agreed that in view of the better financial position of the Club, Messrs. W. B. Keen & Co. should be remunerated as auditors at a fee of five guineas per annum.

The Chairman moved a vote of thanks to Mr. R. A. H. Coombes for his work in disposing of copies of the "BULLETIN" for past years.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chairman: Colonel R. MEINERTZHAGEN, D.S.O.
Vice-Chairman: Mr. E. M. NICHOLSON, C.B.
Hon. Treasurer: Mr. C. N. WALTER (re-elected).
Hon. Secretary: Mr. N. J. P. WADLEY (re-elected).
Committee: Mrs. B. P. HALL.

COMMITTEE, 1955

Colonel R. MEINERTZHAGEN, Chairman (1953).
Mr. E. M. NICHOLSON, Vice-Chairman (1953).
Mr. C. N. WALTER, Honorary Treasurer (1950).
Mr. N. J. P. WADLEY, Honorary Secretary (1950).
Dr. J. G. HARRISON, Editor (1952).
Maj.-Gen. C. B. WAINWRIGHT (1953).
Capt. C. R. S. PITMAN (1953).
Dr. G. BEVEN (1954).
Mrs. B. P. HALL (1955).

The Annual General Meeting was followed by the monthly dinner.

Chairman: Colonel R. Meinertzhagen.

Members present, 28; Guests, 8; Guest of the Club, Professor M. F. M. Meiklejohn; Total 37.

Colonel R. Meinertzhagen made the following remarks:

Long Distance Assisted Sea Passages by Birds

During the past few years an ever increasing number of American birds have been recorded in Britain. This is primarily due to a larger number of watchers and their increased competence in identification. The popular theory of "drift" due to predominant westerly winds, though it may account for the initial stage of the trip across the Atlantic, does not take into consideration long-distance assisted sea passages taken advantage of by many birds. It is my experience that almost all birds when out of sight of land will fly towards and usually rest on a ship, often remaining the night and sometimes long periods.

I give a few cases of long-distance assisted passages.

1. Four House Crows (*Corvus splendens*) came aboard a ship off Colombo and remained for six days, crossing the Indian Ocean, only leaving the ship when Somaliland was sighted (Davis, *Auk*. 1951: 529).

2. A Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*) was carried the whole length of the Red Sea from Perim to Suez, feeding on insects on board (David, *Auk*., 1951: 529).

3. A Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) came aboard a ship off Egypt and was seen daily for ten days, finally leaving when only 900 miles from

Boston. It fed on flies near some cages full of monkeys (Phillips, *Ibis.*, 1952: 530).

4. In October, 1929, twelve brown thrush-like birds flew aboard a ship off Newfoundland and only left the ship when in sight of Ireland (Tait., *Country Life*, 8th Apr., 1954).

5. European starlings leaving a ship when off the coast of Venezuela (Meiklejohn, *Times*, 1st Dec., 1954).

6. A Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*) travelled on a ship from Aden to Suez (Davis, *Auk.*, 1951: 529).

7. Three Nightjars (*Caprimulgus europaeus*) came aboard a ship at Suez in January and remained on board the whole length of the Red Sea, leaving near Perim. (*Personal observation*).

8. In 1895 we received a Snowy Owl (*Nyctea*) alive which had come aboard a ship off Nova Scotia in October and was caught when in sight of Ireland. It lived in our aviaries until 1900 (*Personal observation*).

9. A Greenland Falcon (*Falco rusticolus*) came aboard a ship off Nova Scotia in 1921 and remained on the ship until the Scillies were sighted when it flew off, and presumably the same bird, remained at Tresco the whole winter. (Personal communication from Miss Dorrien Smith who was on the ship and Major Dorrien Smith of Tresco).

10. The American race of the Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) flew aboard a ship off Newfoundland and remained on board for three days, a passage of over 1000 miles, when it was caught and killed. I have the specimen in my collection.

11. A Little Green Heron (*Butorides striatus virescens*) came aboard a ship off the Bahamas and remained until in sight of the Azores when it was caught and killed. The specimen is in my collection.

A specimen of this Heron was shot at Penrose in Cornwall in October, 1889, and should be accepted as a valid British record. I have spoken to the keeper who shot it and have seen the stuffed specimen.

12. At 9 a.m. on October 10th, a tired Robin (*Erithacus*) came aboard a ship 200 miles south of Ushant, accepting food on board and only leaving the ship on reaching London Docks on October 12th. This type of assisted passage might well account for Mediterranean birds occurring in Britain. This Robin travelled 400 miles in reversed migrational direction. (*Bird Notes*, XXVI. 4, 1955, p. 105).

Colonel Meinertzhagen asked what view the Records Sub-Committee of the B.O.U. was going to take in view of these instances of assisted passages.

Mr. Max Nicholson said he thought the only criterion available was whether the bird had come as a captive or voluntarily, but Mr. James Robertson Justice said that if this was to be, there was obviously no limit. For instance he knew an American in California, who had tamed Humming Birds to sit on his finger. If he should come to Britain together with a Humming Bird perched on his finger, would this constitute a new British record ! He also referred to a Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) which he had carried to South America on board one of H.M. Ships in the War.

Professor Meiklejohn mentioned an instance of a wild falcon being fed on board one of Frederick II's ships in the thirteenth-century and in his talk later, showed a slide of the illustration of this.

Professor M. F. M. MEIKLEJOHN then gave a most entertaining talk, a summary of which follows.

A Thirteenth Century Bird Book

(The *De Arte Venandi cum Avibus* of the Emperor Frederick II)

Frederick II (1194–1250), "Stupor Mundi", was one of the most remarkably versatile men in history. A man of learning and a poet himself, he was the patron of men of learning of all sorts and of poets. His most remarkable intellectual characteristic is an impartial and enquiring mind, and his book on birds has claims to be the best ever written: it is based entirely on an original work and Frederick usually only quotes his one reliable predecessor, Aristotle, in order to contradict him. The *De Arte* is, of course, a work dealing with falconry, but, in the First Book, birds in general are described: this description is divided into five sections, namely classification, habits (with special emphasis on feeding), migration, breeding and anatomy. 1. *Classification;* Frederick divides birds into land-birds, water-birds and *aves mediae*, i.e. shore birds. He has a clear idea of relationships, notably in the case of the *corvidae* and the geese. 2. *Behaviour*: Roosting is described, but the emphasis is on feeding, excellent descriptions being given of the feeding methods of bee-eaters and several accipitrines. The good account of bird noises is found in the anatomical section. 3. *Migration;* A first-class understanding of the main phenomena involved. 4. *Breeding;* Among the more interesting facts recorded by Frederick are dispersal of grown brood (but not in cranes), polygamy (Capercaillie cited), non-breeding flocks of adults, male arriving first at breeding place, female recognising male by his song. The territory idea is implied. 5. *Anatomy;* Based obviously on careful and numerous dissections. Frederick mentions the oil gland, nictitating membrane, gular sac of Great Bustard and zygodactylism in woodpeckers and parrots. He gives a perfect description of the wing formula of the Sparrow-Hawk.

Frederick did most of his ornithological work in southern Italy, but visited the Near East on a crusade. He throws interesting light on bird distribution, being acquainted with the Grey Lag, White-fronted and Barnacle Geese, Pelican, Great Bustard, White and Black Storks, Crane and Demoiselle Crane, and the Waldrapp *Comatibis eremita*. He also states that the Sacred Ibis was a native of Palestine. He had in his menagerie a cockatoo (a present from the sultan Al-Kamil) and mentions "aves de paradiso", though it cannot be settled whether these are the birds which are called Birds of Paradise today.

There is no reliable translation of the book into English, that published in America by Casey Wood containing perhaps more errors than any other ornithological work since the Middle Ages. I am at present preparing a new translation of Book I; the main problems are linguistic, involving technical terms and bird names, which are Latinised forms of the names used by the author. These can be identified on the basis of Frederick's account of the bird, the excellent illustrations in the Vatican MS. and research into modern bird names, usually in Sicilian dialect.

A White Australian Goshawk in Captivity

Mr. James Robertson Justice exhibited a colour photograph of his white-phased Australian Goshawk, which he had recently received from Australia and which he is keeping in Scotland.

Comments on the Relationship of some Ducks in the Genus *Aythya* Boie

by Mr. Bryan L. Sage.

Received 10th January, 1955.

Dr. Jeffery G. Harrison has placed on record (*antea* 74: 53–54) a female Tufted Duck, *Aythya fuligula* (Linnaeus), which he shot on the Elbe Estuary, Germany, on 17th February, 1951, This bird had a white frontal band almost as extensive as that in the female Scaup, *Aythya marila marila* (Linnaeus), to which it bore a remarkable resemblance. Dr. Harrison suggests that this is probably a case of autophoric reverse mutation. I strongly agree with this suggestion, and I am able to record an exactly similar bird, also a female, that I saw on Little Tring Reservoir, Herts., on 25th September, 1954. The occurrence of a second example of this mutant in an area far removed from the site of the original record suggests that this mutation may be of more frequent occurrence than the paucity of records suggests.

Another variation in plumage which is quite frequently observed in the Tufted Duck, both male and female, is that of white undertail coverts. This phenomenon is well-known and has often been commented upon in the literature. It is well illustrated on Plate X of the 5th Annual Report of the Severn Wildfowl Trust. This character is one that is possessed normally by the White-Eyed Pochard, *Aythya nyroca nyroca* (Güldenstädt), and its appearance in individuals of the Tufted Duck has often led to errors in identification. It is my opinion that this is also a case of autophoric reverse mutation. The only alternative explanation is that of partial albinism, which I think can be safely discarded. Albinism in any form is rare in the Tufted Duck, in fact the only record I have is that of a complete albino seen on a pond near Mansfield, Notts., during the winter of 1881–82 and recorded by J. Whitaker (*Zoologist*, 1882: 150).

The above quoted records provide additional evidence of the close phylogenetic relationship existing between the species concerned. Further evidence is supplied by the results of hybridisation between these and the other species within the Genus *Aythya*. It is of course, a well-known and established fact that practically any species of duck or goose will cross with another species irrespective of whether they are in the same Genus or not. Many of these crosses, however, are infertile, or if young are produced they are often sterile. I have a number of records of hybridisation between species in the Genus *Aythya*, and it is significant that not only were all these crosses productive of progeny, but the young themselves were perfectly fertile and in many cases continued to breed either with one of the parents or *inter se* for many years. This fact alone illustrates beyond dispute the close phylogenetic affinities of the species concerned. Although the crosses listed below took place in captivity some of them have been

known to occur in a wild state. My records cover both European and American species but with one exception, I will give details only of crosses between European species of this Genus. The one exception which I quote as a matter of interest, is a cross between the Pochard, *Aythya ferina* (Linnaeus) and the Lesser Scaup, *Aythya affinis* (Eyton). In this and all the following examples the male parent is named first. Skins of both sexes of this hybrid were exhibited by Lord Rothschild at the May, 1929, meeting of the B.O.C., the birds were bred at Lilford Hall in 1928 (*antea* XLIX : 93). The records concerning European species are as follows:

Pochard x White-Eyed Pochard—this hybrid was reared at the Zoological Gardens in 1851 and other years (*Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.*, 1880: 526).

Pochard x Scaup—an example of this hybrid was purchased in Leadenhall Market a year or so prior to 1843 and after some changes in ownership passed into the British Museum collection (*B.M. Cat. Birds* XXVII: 340). The skin was exhibited by N. B. Kinnear at the B.O.C. meeting in May 1929. In the first (1843) edition of Yarrell's *British Birds*, p. 247, this specimen is figured as the "American Scaup".

Pochard x Tufted Duck—this cross was recorded in May 1886, at Woodfold Park, Blackburn, Lancashire, when a brood of ten was reared (*Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.*, 1886: 550). A similar cross with the sexes reversed took place at Tring Reservoirs, Hertfordshire, in 1886 and 1887. On the first occasion a brood of nine were reared which were very much like Scaup in appearance (*Trans. Herts. Nat. Hist. Soc.*, V. : 82).

Tufted Duck x White-Eyed Pochard—this cross took place at the Zoological Gardens in 1849 and the young thus produced continued to breed either *inter se* or with one of the parents until 1861 (*Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.*, 1880: 524). On one of the occasions when one of the young mated again with the White-Eyed Pochard the result was a further cross in which the characters were 75 per cent. White-Eyed Pochard and 25 per cent. Tufted Duck. A pair of these hybrids bred at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, were presented to the Zoological Gardens in September, 1920. In 1925, Viscount Grey had quite a large flock of these hybrids at Fallodon.

Scaup x White-Eyed Pochard—in the *B.M. Cat. Birds*, XXVII: 357 there is listed a supposed specimen of this cross.

Some further notes on plumage variations in the Mallard, *Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos* Linneaus

by Mr. Bryan L. Sage

Received 15th March, 1955

I have already placed on record (*antea* 73: 60–61 and 74: 74) a number of plumage variations in the Mallard. Some further examples which came to my notice during the winter of 1954–55 seem worth recording in detail, in these birds the dominant colour of the plumage was chestnut-brown or light chocolate with a white breast. The details are as follows:

Case 1.—On 17th October, 1954, whilst examining a large mixed flock of Mallard and Shoveler, *Spatula clypeata* (Linneaus) on the King George V. Reservoir, Staines, Middlesex, I noticed a very dark coloured male with a white breast amongst them, this bird was later studied at close quarters

both whilst swimming and also whilst standing on the sloping concrete bank of the reservoir. The head and neck were bottle-green; white collar; breast immediately below collar chestnut-brown as in a first winter male Mallard; a large bulb shaped patch of white on the breast; remainder of under and upper-parts chestnut-brown identical in shade to that on the flanks of the male Shoveler; under-tail coverts black, tail white with black central feathers curled upwards; no speculum was visible on the closed wing and the bird was not seen in flight; bill greenish-yellow, legs and feet orange. The table below analyses the characters exhibited by this bird:

Mallard characters (40%)	Shoveler characters (20%)	Characters common to both species (40%)
greenish-yellow bill	—	orange legs and feet
white collar	white breast	bottle-green head
chestnut on upper breast	chestnut-brown flanks and back	black under-tail coverts
curled centre tail feathers	—	white tail with black central feathers

There appears to be three possible explanations of this aberration, they are (*i*) the result of a Mallard x Shoveler cross. (*ii*) an example of autophoric reverse mutation, as described by Harrison (1953), indicating a phylogenetic relationship between *Anas* and *Spatula*, and (*iii*) melanism.

In view of the definite Shoveler characters exhibited by this bird it is my opinion that (*i*) is in fact the correct explanation. J. L. Bonhote (1907) when recording the results of his hybridisation experiments with various species of *Anatidae* states that hybrids may show (1) resemblances to one or other (or presumably both) of the parent species, (2) new variations resembling species other than the parents, or no known species at all. (3) white colouration. It is of course, also possible for a hybrid bird to exhibit a combination of these characters, and in the bird under discussion we find a combination of (1) and (3). An excess of melanin pigment would of course explain the dark chestnut-brown colouration of most of the body, but would not explain the white breast.

Case 2.—This is another male bird seen on Aldenham Reservoir, Hertfordshire, on 12th February, 1955. I am told that as many as five similar birds were also present on the Brent Reservoir, Middlesex, during February, but I did not see these myself.

This bird was accompanied by a normal female Mallard. The male had the typical bottle-green head, greenish-yellow bill and orange-red legs and feet of the Mallard. The white collar was not noticeable as the whole of the upper breast was pure white. The remainder of the under-parts, including the flanks and under-tail coverts were light chocolate in colour. The upper-parts were of a similar, but noticeably paler shade, and there was some slight greyish colouration on the wings. The upper tail coverts

and tail feathers were white strongly obscured with brownish. This bird was seen in flight and the speculum, which was not visible on the closed wing, was seen to be very dark-purplish, in fact almost black in colour, there were no white borders to the speculum.

This bird has a resemblance to the bird described in Case 1, but differs in the pale chocolate colouration of the body and the trace of grey on the wings. I find it difficult to explain the origin of this bird unless it be that it is an escaped domesticated bird of mixed ancestry. But it is remarkable that a number of similar birds should appear elsewhere at the same time. There is in fact, a very similar, though slightly darker bird amongst the domesticated ducks at Woodhall Park in Hertfordshire.

Since going to press I have received some additional information which tends to support my suggestion that the aberrant Mallard-type ducks mentioned in Case 2 are of domestic origin.

In the 4th *Annual Report of the Hertfordshire Ornithological Club* p.89, it is recorded that on 28th March, 1954, at Wigmore, a black duck with a white breast was seen. On 14th April, the bird was still present and appeared to be paired with a normal drake Mallard. This bird showed light wing bars in flight. It was suggested that it had originated from Roath Park Lake, Cardiff, where there is a population of ducks of this type.

G. C. S. Ingram (*in litt.*) has given me some very interesting facts concerning the ducks on Roath Park Lake. There are a number of these ducks and they are dark brown (black at a distance) with bottle-green heads and white breasts, they show a considerable amount of white on the wings. In some of them the lower neck and breast is white, and in others the lower neck is brown and the breast only white. In size they appear slightly larger than the normal drake Mallard. The majority of them appear to be males as they pair with normal female Mallard or some white ducks of similar size which are also present (these are probably domestic Call Ducks). Owing to the depredations of rats very few young are reared, but one brood of ducklings seen were buffish-yellow all over with no markings whatsoever. Although free-winged these aberrant ducks appear to be fairly sedentary.

The aberrant male duck at Woodhall Park, Herts., which I mentioned earlier is now paired with an orange-billed white Call Duck and it will be interesting to see the result.

As the Roath Park Lake population is largely sedentary it follows that a certain amount of interbreeding between individuals of common parentage probably takes place. The larger size of these birds and the white in the wings can perhaps be explained by a series of experiments carried out by E. Hewitt in the 19th century. This gentleman has described (*Journal of Horticulture* 1862: 773 and 1863: 39), how he took eggs of the Wild Duck (Mallard) and hatched them out under a Bantam. The young were reared and were only allowed to breed *inter se*. As a result they became larger with each succeeding generation, the white collar became broader and less regular, and some of the primary wing feathers turned white. Had these experiments been continued for further generations, the birds would probably have been indistinguishable from the typical Aylesbury Duck, which of course, is descended from the wild Mallard.

Another case is on record of a white Aylesbury duck x black Labrador

drake which produced young, some of which assumed typical Mallard plumage as they reached maturity.

The occurrence of aberrant ducks of the type described in widely separated localities is only to be expected when we consider the ease with which wild Mallards will cross with domestic breeds when given the opportunity. On many estates, farms and parks, wild and domestic ducks mingle together and such promiscuous inter-breeding must be of common occurence.

References:

BONHOTE, J. L. (1907)—"*Proc. IV. Intern. Orn. Congr.*, London, 235–264.
HARRISON, JAMES M. (1953)—Bull. B.O.C. Vol. 73, pp. 37–40.

Eastern Asiatic Races of the Bee-eater, *Merops philippinus* Linnaeus

by DR. H. G. DEIGNAN

Received 12th February, 1955.

Hachisuka (The Birds of the Philippine Islands, pt. 3: 170, footnote 1, 1934) has asserted that "Philippine specimens (of the Blue-cheeked Bee-eater) are inseparable from the Javanese bird (*javanicus* of Horsfield)." With this view Peters (Check-list of Birds of the World 5: 235, 1945) has concurred, although remarking in a footnote: "Most instances of occurrence outside of the known breeding range appear to be due to an influx of migrants; the race however may breed in the Philippines and in the mountains of Celebes". My finding in Washington of a subadult specimen collected in Celebes on 28th May and of July - and August - taken adults from Mindanao has led me to re-examine the island birds, with the result that I can show that no fewer than three distinct races have been combined by Hachisuka and Peters under the name *philippinus*.

Study of this species (and some of its congeners) confronts one with some peculiar difficulties. First is the fact that these birds of beaches and clearings rapidly become faded and discoloured by the action of sunlight, and during the breeding period the plumage is further affected by abrasion brought about by their habit of nesting in burrows. Thus true colour appears only in freshly moulted adults.

A more important complication arises from the quasi-iridescent quality of the colouration. If the observer, standing in reflected midday light, looks *directly down* upon a specimen of *Merops philippinus javanicus*, he sees the mantle as a mat green; if, standing back, he looks down at it *into* the light, he sees a mat brown-suffused green; if, still facing the light, he raises the specimen to the level of his eyes, the green is wholly supplanted by a burnished cupreous; finally, raising it near eye level with the light *behind* him, he sees a slightly iridescent golden green. It follows from this that true comparison of the races becomes possible only when the several series are examined from an identical point of view, and, at the risk of incurring the ridicule of those unwilling to experiment for themselves, I shall, in the following paragraphs, find it necessary to postulate the angles of vision from which the racial distinctions may best be seen.

The following south-eastern sub-species can be recognized:

1. *Merops philippinus javanicus* Horsfield.

Merops Javanicus Horsfield, Trans. Linn. Soc. London, 13 (1): 171, May 1821 (Java).

Diagnosis: With the viewer facing the light, standing back and looking down at the specimens lowered near knee level, the mantle is a green near to Light Cress Green (Ridgway), anteriorly lightly suffused with a dull brownish hue.

With the viewer standing back, the light behind him, and looking down at the specimens raised near chest level, the mantle is a slightly iridescent golden green.

Range: Breeding in tropical continental Asia and wintering in Malaysia.

2. *Merops philippinus celebensis* Blasius.

Merops philippinus (Linn.) var. nov. *celebensis* Blasius, Zeitschr. Ges. Orn. 2 (3): 239, Sept. 1885 (South Celebes).

Diagnosis: With the viewer facing the light, standing back and looking down at the specimens lowered near knee level, the mantle is a rather lighter green than in *javanicus* and anteriorly more strongly suffused with a brighter brownish hue.

With the viewer standing back, the light behind him, and looking down at the specimens raised near chest level, the mantle is a slightly iridescent golden green, paler than in *javanicus*.

Range: Celebes.

3. *Merops philippinus philippinus* Linnaeus.

(*Merops*) *philippinus* Linnaeus, Systema Naturae, ed. 12, 1: *errata* (omitted from p. 183), 1766 (Philippines).

Diagnosis: With the viewer facing the light, standing back and looking down at the specimens lowered near knee level, the mantle is a green near to Light Cress Green (Ridgway), anteriorly very strongly suffused with a bright and deep brownish hue.

With the viewer standing back, the light behind him, and looking down at the specimens raised near chest level, the mantle is a slightly iridescent greenish cupreous.

Range: Philippine Islands.

4. *Merops philippinus salvadorii* Meyer.

Merops salvadorii Meyer, Ibis (6) 3 (10): 294, April 1891 (New Britain).

Diagnosis: With the viewer facing the light, standing back and looking down at the specimens lowered near knee level, the mantle is a green near to Lettuce Green (Ridgway), anteriorly lightly suffused with a bright brownish hue.

With the viewer standing back, the light behind him, and looking down at the specimens raised near chest level, the mantle is a slightly iridescent greenish gold.

Range: New Guinea and New Britain.

For this study I have used about one dozen fresh-feathered adults of each race. The recommended angles of vision have not been chosen capriciously: knee level is a convenient one for seeing the series as a

whole, while chest level brings them to a height where full light may reach them over the shoulder of the observer.

For the loan of valuable material and their helpful comments I am indebted to E. Thomas Gilliard of The American Museum of Natural History (New York), and to Austin L. Rand of The Chicago Natural History Museum.

On the occurrence of the Nuthatch, *Sitta europæa* Linnæus, in Iraq. *Sitta europæa davidi ssp. nov.*

by Dr. James M. Harrison

Received 10th January, 1955

No form of the European Nuthatch has previously been recorded in Iraq. It was therefore with considerable interest that, amongst a collection of other birds sent back by Flight Lieutenant D. L. Harrison, there was a specimen of this species collected in Kurdistan in the autumn of 1954.

This example is a male and was shot at Ser 'Amadia, Iraq, on August 22nd, 1954, at 6000 feet altitude in a terrain of scrub oak which forms extensive mountain forests, the other common tree being the poplar, which occupies the valleys. The species was only observed in the scrub oak zone.

Description: Comparison of this specimen has been made with the relevant adjacent populations, from which it was recognised as being quite distinct.

From *S. e. persica* Witherby (W. Persia), it is different in having a decided orchraceous-buff wash on the underparts and in not being quite so pale grey above. When compared with *S. e. rubiginosa* Tschusi and Zarudny (N. Persia), it is again more colourful in the above respects, but from this form it is at once distinguishable by the totally different bill form, for whereas *S. e. davidi*, *S. e. persica* Witherby, *S. e. caucascia* Reichenow and *S. e. levantina* Hartert all possess very slender bills, *S. e. rubiginosa* Tschusi and Zardudny possesses a longer and far more robust bill. From *S. e. caucascia* Reichenow, and *S. e. levantina* Hartert, the new form is far paler both above and below. Compared with birds from Bulgaria, which, in my opinion, also match those from Macedonia, and which have recently been separated as *S. e. harrisoni* Voous[1], (Type locality S.W. Bulgaria), *S. e. davidi* is a less golden-yellow on the underparts and is also paler blue-grey above.

Since the size and form of the bill are of considerable importance in the taxonomy of Nuthatches, I append a tabulation of the bill length (I), bill height (II*a*), and width (II*b*), for the immediately adjacent populations. These last measurements are taken at the base of the bill at the feather margin. The bill coefficient (III) represents the multiplication of (II*a*) and (II*b*). From these, it will be seen that, in general, the bill of *S. e. davidi*

[1] VOOUS, K.H., 1953, *Ardea*, 41, p. 10. The Distributional History of the Nuthatch, *Sitta europæa* L.

shows a close affinity with four of the races investigated, but is markedly divergent in this respect from *S. e. rubiginosa* Tschusi and Zarudny.

COMPARATIVE MEASUREMENTS OF BILLS
(in millimetres from base of skull)
I *length*; II*a height*; II*b width*; III *bill coefficient*

	S. e. davidi	*S. e. persica*	*S. e. caucasica*	*S. e. levantina*	*S. e. rubiginosa*
I	♂ 18.5	♂♂ 15, 16, 18, 19 ♀♀ 15.5, 17.5 18	♂♂ 18, 18	♂♂ 16, 18, 19 ♀♀ 16, 18, 19	♂♂ 20, 21, 25
II	(*a*) 4 (*b*) 6	♂♂ (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6 (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6 (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6 (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6 ♀♀ (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6 (*a*) 4 (*b*) 6 (*a*) 6 (*b*) 6	♂♂ (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6 (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6	♂♂ (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6 (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6 (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6 ♀♀ (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6 (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6 (*a*) 5 (*b*) 6	♂♂ (*a*) 5 (*b*) 7 (*a*) 6 (*b*) 7 (*a*) 6 (*b*) 9
III	24	24–36	30	30	35–54

While it is admitted that the numbers in the groups are minimal, it is believed nevertheless, that the figures may be significant.

It is also of course, realised that the creation of a new form on a single specimen is open to criticism but, on the other hand, this example, both on colour and on structure, proved so distinct that it was decided to adopt this course.

Named in honour of Flight Lieutenant D. L. Harrison, R.A.F., who collected the specimen.

Type: ♂ adult, August 22nd, 1954, Ser 'Amadia, Iraq, 6000 ft. In my collection.

Measurements: Wing 83 mm.; bill 18.5 mm.; height 4 mm.; width 6 mm.; bill coefficient 24 mm.; tarsus 17 mm.; tail 42 mm.

The first occurrence of the Bateleur and Red Kite in Iraq

by Dr. Jeffery G. Harrison

Received 29th December, 1954.

On October 8th, 1954, I was fortunate to see a Bateleur, *Terathopius ecaudatus* (Daudin) as I was travelling along the Baghdad road, between Habbaniya and Feluja in Iraq. The bird, which was quite unmistakable, flew over our Land Rover within about fifteen yards of me. It was predominantly a black-bodied eagle, with long, round-ended wings and a

short paler tail, while the red at the base of the bill and the red feet were plainly visible, as was the white under the wing.

Colonel Meinertzhagen (''Birds of Arabia'', p. 358) records the species only from south-west Arabia, where it is uncommon. This record is very considerably to the north across the Arabian desert, but Colonel Meinertzhagen pointed out to me that the bird is a reptile-eater and that there are plenty of reptiles in the desert to support it on such a journey. He also states in his book that he never saw a Bateleur flap its wings except when taking off. This bird too, sailed serenely over, without any sign of fear or trace of a wing beat as it crossed our path.

During the middle two weeks of October, 1954, there was a definite migration of large hawks moving south-casterly down the Euphrates. On October 11th, two Red Kites, *Milvus milvus milvus* (Linnaeus) were identified at Habbaniya as they circled high up over the river, very slowly drifting south-east. The well-marked fork in the tails and the light patches at the bases of the primaries were obvious; their crowns when visible as they turned, looked white and their tails, with the sun shining through the feathers, light chestnut. Below them several Black Kites, *Milvus migrans* (Boddaert) from Habbaniya were circling to afford a most satisfactory comparison.

Allouse (''The Avifauna of Iraq'', p. 22) has no record of this species, but adds that its occurrence is likely as it occurs in Asia Minor and Palestine.

The Development of the Skull in the Cream-coloured Courser, Stone Curlew and Houbara Bustard

by Dr. Jeffery G. Harrison *and* Dr. David L. Harrison

Received 15th January, 1955

In a paper read before the British Ornithologists' Club[1] in 1949, we described the development of the cranial vault in birds and bats from the immature, translucent single-layered structure to the fully developed, opaque double-layered bony structure. These two layers, the inner and outer tables, are joined together by trabeculae, which give the bone its external dotted appearance, the space between the two layers being fully pneumatised by ingrowths of air cells originating from the nasal cavity and auditory capsules.

We pointed out that there were a number of species of birds and almost all the *Microchiroptera* in bats, which retained single-layered translucent ''windows'' in the cranial vault in the fully adult state and went on to suggest that many of these exceptional findings could be associated with a possible adaptation enabling the species to withstand the intracranial blood pressure changes associated with the effects of acceleration, deceleration and transverse G, as would be experienced in the erratic flight of such species as the Swift, *Apus apus* (Linnaeus), wading birds of the Order *Charadriiformes*, and insect-eating bats of the Order *Microchiroptera*, and the sudden deceleration experienced by certain diving birds on entering the water.

[1] Dr. Jeffery G. Harrison and Mr. David L. Harrison—''*Some Developmental Peculiarities in the Skulls of Birds and Bats*''—Bull. B.O.C. Vol. 69, pp. 61–70, 1949.

There are, however, a number of species, mostly among the *Passeres*, to which this theory cannot easily apply; the Yellow Bunting, *Emberiza citrinella* Linnaeus, appears to be one, while Mr. C. M. N. White[1] and Dr. James P. Chapin[2,3] of the American Museum of Natural History have pointed out others. Writing to us on May 26th, 1949, Dr. Chapin said "As a rule, the last area of the skull roof to attain the adult condition with double wall is just behind the space between the two orbits. But among Swallows I have found that the dwindling "windows" are usually placed wide apart on the parietals, and in the *Geospiza* group of the *Fringillidae* they are far to the rear, close to the occiput. In some Geospizas these thin areas may be retained in adult life. Whether there is any adaptive significance to these unusual conditions among Passeres I have never been able to discover, but they may furnish evidence as to immediate relationships, and thus are of considerable interest in the *Geospiza* group".

Since writing our paper we have continued to study the skulls of a number of different species of birds and bats and it is becoming increasingly obvious to us that there is a great deal more to be learnt. We hope eventually to complete a survey of the skull development in representative species of all the families of British birds and of the bats of the world. Some exceptions may prove to be a flight adaptation as we have suggested, but we agree with Dr. Chapin that the development of others may well prove helpful in problems of classification.

We have pointed out that in maturity the wading birds of the Order *Charadriiformes* retain skull "windows", the maturity being judged by the absence of blood vessels at the periphery of the "windows". In Iraq recently, we discovered two most interesting exceptions to this. A female Cream-coloured Courser, *Cursorius cursor cursor* (Latham) collected by J.G.H. on October 13th, 1954, on the Haur al Hasa desert edge near Feluja was found to our surprise to have a fully pneumatised skull. The Courser is in some respects remarkably like a small Bustard and we determined to obtain a Houbara Bustard, *Clamydotis undulata* (Jaquin) and examine its skull. A female was obtained by D.L.H. in the Jazira desert, about 20 miles north of Feluja, on November 27th. 1954, and this was also found to have a fully pneumatised skull. A male Stone Curlew, *Burhinus oedicnemus* (Linnaeus) which D.L.H. collected on the Haur al Hasa desert edge on December 24th, 1954, similarly had a fully pneumatised skull, and completed the trio which we particularly wished to examine.

Until we understand the physiological reason for the retention of these single-layered "windows", it is obviously unwise to deduce too much from the findings and we would merely point out that in our opinion the full development of the skull in the Cream-coloured Courser and Stone Curlew may indicate that systematists have been wrong in placing these two species in the Order *Charadriiformes*. Obviously they present a

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[1] Mr. C. M. N. White—"*Skull Ossification in certain Passeriformes*"—The Ibis, Vol. 90, p. 329, 1948.

[2] Dr. James P. Chapin—"*Classification of the Weaver Birds*"—Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., Vol. 37, p. 258, 1917.

[3] Dr. James P. Chapin—"*Pneumatisation of the Skull in Birds*"—The Ibis, Vol. 91. p. 691, 1949.

problem in classification, but we believe our findings lend support to those who consider these two species may be a link between the *Charadriiformes* and the Bustards. In any case, Orders are artificial. The Bustards, *Otididae*, have been placed in the *Ralliformes*, but our preliminary findings in the *Rallidae* indicate at least a delayed pneumatisation.

In conclusion, we feel that it is open to criticism to use the *presence* of "windows" as arguments in classification problems. If they do prove to be flight adaptations, it must be that they originated at a later date than the bird in which they are found. In the case of the Courser and Stone Curlew, our arguments are based upon the *absence* of "windows". Classification is more likely to be served by studying the *method* of pneumatisation, of which little is known, but we are at present studying this aspect of the problem.

We are grateful to Dr. James M. Harrison who has given us his advice over this paper.

The South African Subspecies of the Yellow-fronted Canary *Serinus mozambicus* (Müller)

By Mr. P. A. Clancey

Received 5th February, 1955.

The question of recognising other than the nominate race of the Yellow-fronted Canary *Serinus mozambicus* (Müller) from Africa south of the Zambesi River has resulted in much conflict of opinion, and the literature on the subject is now comparatively extensive. Sclater and Mackworth-Praed, in their revision of the races of this species, "Ibis", 1918, p. 465, and Sclater, "Systema Avium Aethiopicarum", part ii, 1930, p. 813, recognise only one race for the sub-continent, relegating to the synonymy of *S. m. mozambicus* (Müller), 1776: Mozambique, the putatively darker *S. m. icterus* (Vieillot), 1823: South Africa. Roberts, in a valuable note in the "Annals of the Transvaal Museum", vol. xvi, 1, 1935, p. 182, upholds the validity of the southern *S. m. icterus* and proposes the recognition of three races from South Africa, including his then recently described *S. m. vansoni* Roberts, 1932: Zweizwe Waterhole, northern Bechuanaland, and a similar view is expressed by the same author in his "Birds of South Africa", 1940, p. 366. More recently, Vincent, "Check List of the Birds of South Africa", 1952, p. 114, accords recognition to *S. m. mozambicus* and *S. m. vansoni*, rejecting *S. m. icterus* which is again placed in the synonymy of the nominotypical subspecies. Through the courteous co-operation of the Directors of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria, the Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg, and the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia, Bulawayo, I have now been able to assemble and study a comprehensive material of 130 skins of the southern African populations of this common fringillid, and conclude that Roberts was prefectly justified in recommending the retention of a dark southern race, *S. m. icterus*, as distinct from *S. m. mozambicus*. The topotypical material of *S. m. vansoni* at present available in southern African collections is inadequate, but that which has been studied supports the view that the northern Bechuanaland populations are not subspecifically distinguishable from those of *S. m. mozambicus*.

Fringilla mozambica Müller, "Des Ritters C. von Linne. . . . Natursystems Supplement", 1776, p. 163, was described from Mozambique, and of the topotypical populations I have examined a series of specimens from Boror in northern Portuguese East Africa and from several localities in the southern province of the territory. This topotypical material is matched perfectly by specimens from a wide range of localities in the eastern parts of the interior (Nyasaland, Southern Rhodesia, northern Bechuanaland (Ngamiland), and the Transvaal). Material from northern Bechuanaland (topotypical of *S. m. vansoni*) is extremely limited in the research collections available to me, consisting only of a series of four, including the *Type* of *S. m. vansoni*. Roberts, "Annals of the Transvaal Museum", vol. xv, 1, 1932, p. 33, describes *S. m. vansoni* as "Differing from *S. m. mozambicus* (Müller) of Mozambique in its paler general colouration above and below. The yellow frontal band also constantly narrower and the tips of the tail feathers whiter", but not one of the characters enumerated actually serves to differentiate the proposed race. Of the inadequate paratypical series only the *Type* is now available in South Africa, and critical examination of it shows that it is in slightly worn plumage and that it is probably wrongly sexed. It is in no way paler than many specimens before me from localities within the range of *S. m. mozambicus* as defined by Roberts, *loc. cit.*, 1940, nor does it show less yellow on the forehead and more white in the tail than a great many examples of the nominate race. Similarly, the other three topotypical specimens of *S. m. vansoni* cannot be separated, and from the evidence now available it would appear that *S. m. vansoni* is not a valid race and must be sunk into the synonymy of *S. m. mozambicus*.

In the extreme south of the range of this species, in the eastern Cape Province and Natal, occur populations which differ significantly from those considered above. Viewed in series specimens of the southern populations, are markedly darker and greener above, less inclined to grey, and the sides of the breast and body and the flanks are darker, particularly in the female. There is also a tendency for the yellow surfaces in the southern birds to be more intensely coloured. This finding fits into the normal pattern of geographical variation to be expected in polytypic avian species with distributions ranging from the summer rainfall areas of the eastern Cape Province and Natal to the infinitely drier and less humid regions of the high interior and the eastern lowlands of Portuguese East Africa. The dark southern, peripheral populations clearly warrant recognition as a race, and for them the name *Fringilla ictera* Vieillot, "Tableau Encyclopédique et Méthodique . . . Ornithologie", vol. iii, 1823, p. 972: South Africa, is available, as already shown by Roberts and other workers. At the time Vieillot described his *F. ictera* only certain of the coastal districts of the eastern Cape Province and Natal of this favourite cagebird's South African range were readily accessible to European travellers and navigators. In order to stabilize the position of *S. m. icterus* in modern systematics it would seem desirable to define a more precise type-locality than simply "South Africa", and on historical grounds I here propose to restrict the type-locality of *S. m. icterus* to the EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE, South Africa.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that two reasonably well-marked races of *S. mozambicus* are maintainable within the confines

of the South African sub-continent, and the nomenclature, characters and ranges of the races concerned can be defined as follows:

1. *Serinus mozambicus mozambicus* (Müller).

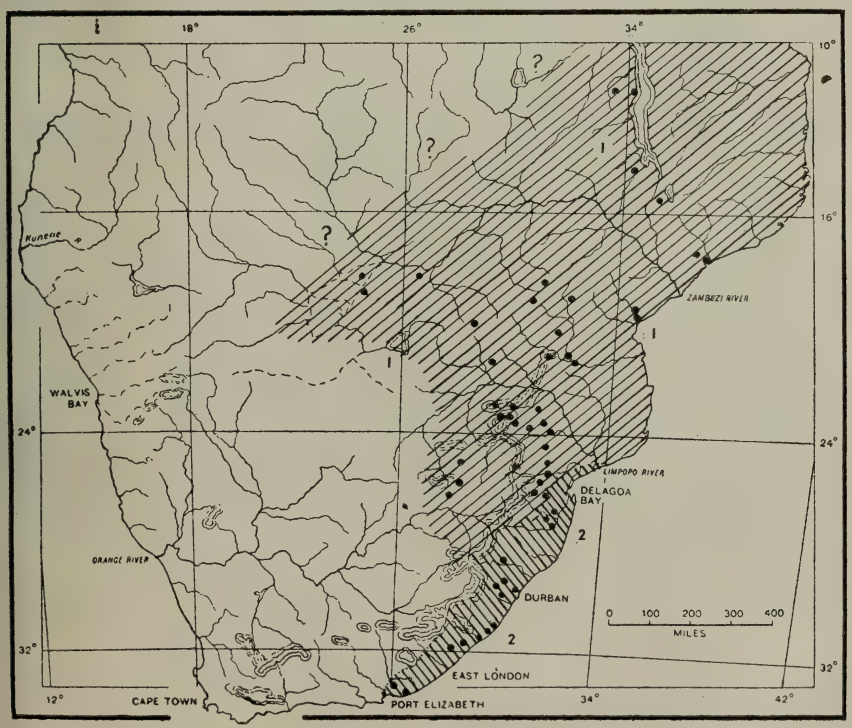
Fringilla mozambica P.L.S. Müller, "Des Ritters C. von Linne. . . . Natursystems Supplement", 1776, p. 163: Mozambique.

Synonym: *Serinus mozambicus vansoni* Roberts, "Annals of the Transvaal Museum", vol. xv, 1, 1932, p. 33: Zweizwe Waterhole, between Mababe Flats and the Chobe River, northern Bechuanaland.

Upper parts pale greyish olive-green, feathers with darker centres. On ventral surfaces, sides of the breast and body and the flanks washed greyish olivaceous. Wings (flattened), 64–73.5 mm. (Seventy-five specimens examined).

Range: Within the South African sub-continent ranges from the northern parts of Bechuanaland (Ngamiland), the Transvaal, parts of the Orange Free State, and Southern Rhodesia eastward to Swaziland and the lowlands of southern Portuguese East Africa. Extra-limitally throughout the eastern half of Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, northern Portuguese East Africa, and presumably to southern Tanganyika Territory, but

Map showing the approximate ranges of the two recognisable South African races of *Serinus mozambicus* (Müller). Black dots indicate localities from which material has been critically examined. 1. *S.m.mozambicus*. 2. *S.m.icterus*.



northernmost limits both in the west and east still by no means clear. White and Winterbottom, "Check List of the Birds of Northern Rhodesia", 1949, p. 133, keep separate from the more widely distributed *S. m. mozambicus* the populations resident in Barotseland, using the name *S. m. vansoni* for the purpose. Material from Barotseland and adjacent areas to the westward should be re-examined in the light of what is here recorded.

Note: The species is recorded by Andersson "Notes on the Birds of Damaraland, etc.", 1872, p. 183, from Damaraland, South West Africa, but Herr W. Hoesch (*in litt.* January, 1955), states "We have never seen it in South West Africa in all the years". It is doubtful if this canary does in fact occur within the political boundaries of South West Africa.

2. *Serinus mozambicus icterus* (Vieillot).

Fringilla ictera Vieillot, "Tableau Encyclopédique et Méthodique . . . Ornithologie", vol. iii, 1823, p. 972: South Africa. Restricted type-locality: eastern Cape Province, South Africa, *vide supra.*

Darker and greener dorsally than *S. m. mozambicus*, with the sides of the breast and body and the flanks darker, particularly in the female. Yellow surfaces richer coloured. Wings (flattened) 66–74 mm. (Fifty-five specimens examined).

Range: The southern parts of the eastern Cape Province eastward through Pondoland, East Griqualand and Natal to Zululand and the littoral of the extreme southern parts of Portuguese East Africa.

Symmetrical Albinism in the Golden Plover *Charadrius apricarius* Linnaeus

by Mr. Bryan L. Sage

Received 15th February, 1955

Dr. Jeffery G. Harrison has recorded (*antea* 73: 105) an example of this species exhibiting symmetrical albinism in the wings. This bird was seen on the Firth of Inverness on 31st September, 1953, and had approximately the first five flight feathers on each wing pure white.

Two additional records of symmetrical albinism in this species have now come to my notice. The first is that of a bird shot in the Isle of Skye on 28th June, 1884, which had the greater part of the primaries in each wing pure white (*Zoologist* 1884: 346). I am indebted to Dr. N. F. Ticehurst for the second record. He informs me (*in litt.*) that whilst on the high fjeld in Nordne Østerdal, Norway, on 21st August, 1893, he saw amongst a number of small parties of Golden Plover, a single bird with most, and probably all of the primaries pure white.

Addenda to List of Members as at December, 1954

1954 Van Tyne, J.; University of Michigan, Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.

BACK NUMBERS OF THE "BULLETIN"

Back numbers of the "Bulletin" can be obtained at 2/6 each. Applications should be made to R. A. H. Coombes, Esq., Zoological Museum, Tring, Herts. No reply will be sent if parts are not available.

Members who have back numbers of the "Bulletin" which they no longer require, are requested to kindly send them to R. A. H. Coombes, Esq., as above.

DINNERS AND MEETINGS FOR 1955

17th May, 20th September, 18th October, 15th November, 13th December.

SEPARATES

Contributors who desire free copies of the Bulletin containing their notes should state so on their MS., otherwise these will not be ordered. These will be supplied up to a maximum of fifty.

PUBLICATION OF THE "BULLETIN"

Members who make a contribution at a Meeting should hand the MS. to the Editor at that Meeting. As the proofs will be corrected by the Editor, it is essential that the MS. should be correct and either typed or written very clearly with scientific and place names in block letters. The first mention of a scientific name should be spelt out in full, i.e., genus, specific name, racial name (if any), and author. Any further mention of the same name need only have the initial letter of the genus and no further mention of the author.

If no MS. is handed to the Editor at the Meeting, a note will be inserted mentioning the contribution.

BLACK AND WHITE ILLUSTRATIONS

The Committee have decided that in future the Club will pay for a reasonable number of black and white blocks at the discretion of the Editor. If the contributor wishes to have the blocks to keep for his own use afterwards, the Club will not charge for them, as has been done in the past.

Communications are not restricted to members of the British Ornithologists' Club, and contributions up to 1,500 words on taxonomy and related subjects will be considered from all who care to send them to The Editor, Dr. J. G. Harrison, "Merriewood", St. Botolph's Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Communications relating to other matters should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, N. J. P. Wadley, Esq., 14 Elm Place, London, S.W.7.

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PURCHASED

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OF THE

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Edited by
DR. JEFFERY HARRISON

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BULLETIN
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BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

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The five hundred and fortieth meeting was held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, on Tuesday, 17th May, following a dinner at 6.30 p.m.

Chairman: COLONEL R. MEINERTZHAGEN.

Members present, 14; Total, 14.

European Nuthatch in Iraq

Dr. James M. Harrison exhibited the first example of the European Nuthatch, *Sitta europæa davidi*, from Ser 'Amadia, Kurdistan, Iraq, which was described on pages 59–60 of the present volume of the BULLETIN.

French and Italian Bird-Calls

Capt. Collingwood Ingram and Mr. John Buxton exhibited and demonstrated a collection of French and Italian bird-calls. Many of these were of simple design and easy to use, but Capt. Ingram explained that others required special skill and that in consequence, not possessing this, he was unable to demonstrate these.

Among the more successful bird-calls (known in France as "*appeaux*") were those imitating the notes of the Curlew, Peewit, Moorhen, Mallard, Wood Pigeon, Red-legged Partridge, Magpie and Quail, but in the hands of the expert, Capt. Ingram assured his audience that many of those he was unable to demonstrate were equally effective and indeed, from one, out of which he could only emit the crudest of sounds he had heard an Italian reproduce very faithfully the full song of a Song Thrush.

A discussion, in which several members took part, followed this most interesting and amusing demonstration. Some points of considerable interest arose; for instance the double note which the speaker had seen used to lure Golden Plover within gun shot, and which he asserted he had not heard uttered by that species, but which nevertheless had proved very successful, was explained by the Chairman as imitating the wounded bird's call, and one which invariably brings others to the scene. Sir Landsborough Thomson suggested that possibly absolute reproductive accuracy in the calls might not be essential but that some note or phrase might be sufficient, just as to evoke a display threat in such a species as the Robin, all that was necessary was to show it the isolated red feathering of the gorget, this proving a sufficient stimulus.

Dr. James Harrison thought that the capacity for the appreciation of the accuracy of artificially reproduced calls might vary with different species, as Bullfinches were very critical in this respect and quick to detect any unnatural intonation in pitch or quality.

Journey in Jordan

Mr. P. A. D. Hollom gave a short talk on his recent visit to the Near East of which the following is a summary:

The journey was undertaken in connection with a proposed Field Guide to the birds of N. Africa and W. Asia, and was made possible by a generous Leverhulme Research Award. I arrived in Beirut on 16th April, and in a 95-mile drive that evening to the Cedars of Lebanon the almost complete dearth of small birds was very striking. Even the smallest are shot and eaten as a delicacy, this time of year being regarded as the "season". Clearly, most resident birds have been shot out in the coastal strip between Beirut and Tripoli, but I did see a Bulbul, one or two Crested Larks and a Kestrel. In marked contrast were the numbers of Swifts in the large towns, and a few House Sparrows survived in some of the villages; presumably the built-up areas are safer than the countryside. No Tristram's Serins remain in the Cedars, but some were found at Ehden, a few miles down the road towards Tripoli.

From Lebanon I went to Syria and visited Djaboull Lake near Aleppo with Mr. P. I. Lake, the British Consul; highlights were Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters and 4 White Pelicans, also a flock of about 150 Flamingos, 60–70 Spoonbills in a tight pack, and Kentish Plovers were breeding at the edge of the lake.

Thence to Jordan, an ideal Arab country with a cheerful, courteous, contented-seeming people among whom baksheesh and petty pilfering appeared almost unknown. I had the inestimable advantages of generous help from the Arab Legion (ranging from sea-borne transport with the Dead Sea Flotilla to a desert patrol and accommodation in an outpost of the Camel Corps), and wonderful co-operation from a ground-based survey team of Hunting Aerosurveys Ltd. who allowed me to join their trips whenever I wished. The arid, rugged Dead Sea depression has a most interesting group of breeding birds including Blackstart, Tristram's Grackle, See-See Partridge, Fan-tailed Raven, Palestine Babbler and Dead Sea Sparrow. At higher elevations the hills overlooking the Dead Sea and Jordan valley used to be forested, but now only scrub remains. At this time of year the thicker oak scrub was swarming with warblers, while Jays, Turtle Doves, and the song of Wrens, Blackbirds, Greenfinches and Nightingales gave an English effect to the scene. East of these hills lies a belt of rolling cornland where Calandra Larks outnumbered all others. Eastwards again the country gives way to desert, Isabelline Wheatears appearing on the marginal land. In the desert proper Shore Larks were encountered regularly, and Cream-coloured Coursers seen on every journey, also occasional Desert Wheatears, Desert Larks and others. In the heart of the eastern Jordan desert lies Azraq, a depression containing perennial fresh marsh and a seasonally fluctuating lagoon in a vast salty, sandy pan.

Although well below its winter maximum, the dimensions of the water area in May could still be measured in miles. It was alive with birds—hundreds of Ruffs, scores of Avocets, dozens of Temminck's Stints and Wood Sandpipers, five species of heron, flocks of White-winged Black Terns, Bee-eaters, Red-throated Pipits.

To what extent these were winter visitors, passage migrants or breeding birds I do not know, but in no part of the country could one escape the impression of a flow of migrants sweeping up over the land day and night. At Azraq Sand Martins were everywhere one day, gone next morning but a flock of Pratincoles descended out or the sky to hawk over the water in their place. In the open desert one repeatedly saw Swallows passing; a shallow desert wadi with some pistachio trees produced 17 species (Marsh Harrier to Nightingale) in a before-breakfast walk. One day Masked or Red-backed Shrikes were continually in evidence; another day the bushes would seem full of Blackcaps or Lesser Whitethroats. In the rocky wilderness of Petra a Squacco Heron and Golden Oriole were curiously out of place, and over the cliffs and hill-sides flanking the Dead Sea hawks sailed northwards morning, noon and evening.

The Call-Note of Iraki Wood Pigeons

by Dr. Jeffery G. Harrison

Received 20th March, 1955

It is well known that certain species of birds have developed geographical differences in their calls. One of the most distinct I have heard so far was that of the Wood Pigeon, *Columba palumbus*, at Habbaniya, Iraq, in October, 1954. Hollom in the "Popular Handbook of British Birds" describes the call-note in this country as a repeated phrase usually of five notes "*coo-cooo-coo, coo-coo*". The Iraki variation has a quite different rhythm, the repeated phrase consisting only of three notes—"*coo-coo-cuk*", the last syllable being cut short and more like the first note of a male Cuckoo, *Cuculus canorus canorus* Linnaeus. Quite apart from the distinctive rhythm, the call is considerably higher-pitched and quite lacks the purring quality of the British counterpart.

This call is so distinctive that I did not at first realise it belonged to a Wood Pigeon. I do not possess a particularly musical ear, but comments on the Wood Pigeon's call appear in my diary on the first day in Iraq. It was therefore rather a surprise to read in the "Survey of Iraq Fauna", p. 379, that Major R. E. Cheeseman in the first World War, recorded the cooing as "exactly similar" to that of the British bird. Even if he was quite tone deaf, he would surely have noted the different rhythm. In the 1914–18 war, the Wood Pigeon had a patchy resident status within the distribution of palm groves in Iraq. It did not occur at Habbaniya, which it has colonised since and is now common, no doubt as a result of the irrigation and wonderful growth of trees on the R.A.F. Station. It seems more than likely therefore that the distinct call-note has evolved since Major Cheeseman's time. Unfortunately I was not able to discover whether this call varied within Iraq, but my brother, Flight Lieutenant David Harrison, tells me that the call-note was similar across the

Euphrates in the Saqlawiya area. Allouse in the "Avifauna of Iraq" (1953) does not mention the call of the Wood Pigeon and Habbaniya is not named as a locality for the species.

Of three other species common in both countries, but represented by different geographical races in Iraq, the voices of the Magpie, *Pica pica*, and the House Sparrow, *Passer domesticus*, were indistinguishable, but the Hooded Crow, *Corvus cornix*, was less harsh and higher-pitched in Iraq. It would be interesting to know why certain species should develop call-note differences when others do not and whether these differences take the form of a cline.

Geographical Variation in the Orange Thrush *Turdus gurneyi* Hartlaub of Eastern and South Eastern Africa

by Mr. P. A. Clancey

Received 14th March, 1955.

The striking Orange Thrush *Turdus gurneyi* Hartlaub is an inhabitant of the moister parts of pristine forests, ranging from the coastal districts of Pondoland northwards to Mt. Kenya in Kenya Colony. Inhabiting as it does isolated forest islands on mountains throughout most of its range, it is subject to considerable geographical variation, which has been studied by many competent workers. Much published work has also been devoted to elucidating the question of its relationship to the closely allied *Turdus piaggiae* Bouvier, which differs in having an immaculate eye-ring, no bold facial patterning, and the head-top is russet and not olive-brown or grey. Recent authoritative pronouncements opine that *T. gurneyi* and *T. piaggiae*, for long considered conspecific, are separate species, both with many races, their ranges overlapping apparently only on Mt. Kenya, where *T. g. chuka* (van Someren) and *T. p. keniensis* (Mearns) occur, and in the highlands of the south-eastern Belgian Congo.

Neumann, "*Journal für Ornithologie*", 1906, p. 287, reviews the races as known at that time; Sclater, "*Systema Avium Æthiopicarum*" part ii, 1930, pp. 443–444, recognises three races of *T. gurneyi, sens. strict.*; Mackworth-Praed and Grant, "*Ibis*", 1937, pp. 874–877, recognise four, namely, *T. g. gurneyi* Hartlaub, 1864: Natal, South Africa; *T. g. raineyi* (Mearns), 1913: Mt. Mbololo, south-eastern Kenya Colony; *T. g. usambarae* (Neumann), 1920: Usambara Mountains, north-eastern Tanganyika Territory; and *T. g. chuka* (van Someren), 1930: Mt. Kenya, Kenya Colony. *T. g. otomitrus* (Reichenow), 1904: Rungwe district, south-western Tanganyika Territory, is placed as a synonym of the nominate subspecies. Van Someren, "*Journal of the East Africa and Uganda Natural History Society*", vol. xiv, 1939, pp. 77–80, reviews the East African races and describes a new one. *i.e.*, *T. g. chyulu* (van Someren), 1939: Chyulu Mountains, southern Kenya Colony. Recent work has tended to question the sinking of *T. g. otomitrus* into the synonymy of the nominate race by Mackworth-Praed and Grant (see Chapin, "*Birds of the Belgian Congo*", part iii, 1953, p. 577; and Benson, "*Ostrich*", vol. xxi, 1, 1950, pp. 29–30), but only one race (*T. g. gurneyi*) is currently recognised from the southern portion of Nyasaland to the eastern Cape Province. Such a classification of the southern populations of the species seemed

rather unnatural in view of the extensive geographical variation accorded taxonomic recognition in the northern Tanganyika Territory—southern Kenya Colony sector of the species' wide range, and through the courteous co-operation of the Directors of the Coryndon Memorial Museum (through Mr. J. G. Williams), the Transvaal Museum (through Dr. G. Rudebeck), and the Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg, it has recently been possible to assemble and study series of all the described races. I am also grateful to Drs. Dean Amadon and A. L. Rand for kindly sending me details of the specimens of *T. gurneyi* in the collections of the American Museum of Natural History and the Chicago Natural History Museum. As a result of this study I propose to recognise no less than seven geographical races of this thrush.

Turdus gurneyi Hartlaub was first made known to science in the year 1864 on the basis of a specimen obtained by Thomas Ayres in a forest immediately to the north of Pietermaritzburg, Natal. This forest is now much reduced in size, and is locally known as "Town Bush". *T. gurneyi* apparently no longer occurs in its type-locality, but it is still to be found in several of the larger interior forests of the province. Of the topotypical populations I have examined four carefully preserved specimens collected personally in the Ingeli Forest, Natal–Cape Border, in September, 1951, and I have also been able to examine three additional examples from the contiguous Pondoland populations collected by H. H. Swinny in the early part of the present century. The seven specimens of the southern populations of *T. gurneyi* before me are remarkably uniform and are charactized by their generally large size (wing ♂♀ 112–116, tail 86–93 mm.) and brownish olive dorsal colouration, the crown only slightly darker than the back. These southern birds appear to differ from all other populations of the species in having no cinnamon suffusion on the rump and upper tail-coverts, and from all but those of *T. g. chuka* in their larger size, and I consider that they constitute a well-defined austral race—*T. g. gurneyi*—with a distribution ranging from the coastal forests of Pondoland, the interior forests of East Griqualand and Natal to Zululand and the south-eastern Transvaal.

Examination of two specimens from the forest at Woodbush in the northern Transvaal shows that the populations are not attributable to the nominate race. These two specimens and another one, which is similar in all respects, from the eastern highlands of Southern Rhodesia reveal characters which are clearly of racial import. Viewed in series they are seen to be altogether browner dorsally than *T. g. gurneyi*, and the rump and upper tail-coverts are a deep cinnamon–brown, while the wings and tails are distinctly tinged reddish. There are other minutiæ of plumage colouration, as well as a marked tendency to smaller size (wing ♂♀ 106.5–109.5, tail 83–86.5 mm.) The presence of cinnamon on the rump and upper tail-coverts of eastern Southern Rhodesian and northern Transvaal birds was obviously noted both by Sclater, *loc. cit.*, and Roberts, "*Birds of South Africa*", 1940, p. 232, when they suggested that these populations should, perhaps, be referred to *T. g. otomitrus* of Nyasaland, but *T. g. otomitrus* has, among other differentiating criteria, the head-top darker and the tail much shorter (75–81 mm.) than the birds of the populations here considered. It is clearly evident that the populations of the northern

Transvaal and eastern Southern Rhodesian highland forests represent a distinct innominate race, which is formally described as *T. g. disruptans* mihi below.

The populations of Nyasaland, and the highlands of southern Tanganyika Territory and adjacent areas to the westward are completely isolated from the two races occurring to the south of the Zambesi River. Benson, "*Check List of the Birds of Nyasaland*", 1953, p. 54, and in his note, *loc. cit.*, recognises two racial groups of populations in Nyasaland, the southern populations being attributed to the nominate race and the northern ones to *T. g. usambarae* (sic!). Critical study of material collected at widely scattered points in Nyasaland and south-western Tanganyika Territory (Transvaal Museum collection) has failed to reveal any constant differences between the various populations. Poorly prepared native skins from south-western Tanganyika Territory and northern Nyasaland, with much of the head and neck skin badly telescoped, have aided in the forming of an erroneous impression that the populations are darker crowned than those of the south. When compared with *T. g. disruptans* Nyasaland and southern Tanganyika Territory birds are readily separable by their rather richer and more saturated upper-parts, darker, greyish, head-top, and much shorter tail, and I believe that they represent but one well-defined geographical race. For this race the name *T. g. otomitrus* (Reichenow), 1904, is available, the *Type* being from Bulongwa, near Mwaya, Rungwe district, south-western Tanganyika Territory. Recently, Verheyen, "*Exploration du Parc National Upemba, Mission de Witte*", fasc. 19, 1953, p. 548, has recorded the obtaining of this race of *T. g. gurneyi* in a gallery forest of the Upemba National Park, Katanga, southern Belgian Congo, at 1,250 meters, so that the range of *T. g. otomitrus* extends from the Katanga highlands (Upemba) eastwards to the southern highlands oi Tanganyika Territory and south to the isolated montane forests of southern Nyasaland and immediately adjacent Portuguese East Africa.

The next group of populations to be considered is that found in the highlands of Uluguru and Usambara of north-eastern Tanganyika Territory. These populations have been separated as a race, *T. g. usambarae*, by Neumann (1920), the *Type* from Mlala, near Amani, in the Usambaras. Of this race I have examined three topotypes collected by R. E. Moreau and now in the collection of the Coryndon Memorial Museum. When compared with *T. g. otomitrus* birds from the Usambara Mountains show certain interesting differences, which clearly warrant the recognition of *T. g. usambarae*. Mensurally *T. g. usambarae* is similar to *T. g. otomitrus*, but the plumage colouration is rather more intense, the head-top darker ashen grey and the upper-parts generally darker, while on the ventral surfaces the orange-russet is more chromatic, but the most constant and reliable racial criterion would appear to be the shape of the bill, which is quite characteristic. The bill of *T. g. usambarae* is heavier and less gradually tapered than in its immediate geographical congeners, while van Someren, *loc. cit.*, has also placed considerable reliance on the fact that examples of *T. g. usambarae* generally have the under tail-covert a buffish white, and not white pure as in *T. g. otomitrus* and *T. g. raineyi*. This latter character, though slight, does seem to be a valid one, and is of interest on account of the fact that buffish under tail-coverts are to be found in a distant

austral racial subdivision of the species (*T. g. disruptans*). The range of *T. g. usambarae* is still imperfectly known: it occurs on the Uluguru and Usambara Mountains of north-eastern Tanganyika Territory, and according to Mackworth-Praed and Grant, *loc. cit.*, ranges in a north-westerly direction to the forests on Mts. Meru and Oldeani.

The species has not yet been taken on Mt. Kilimanjaro, but it occurs commonly in the forests of Mt. Mbololo and at other points of the Teita Range in south-eastern Kenya Colony. The populations occurring in this area differ from *T. g. usambarae* in being paler on the head-top and more golden-green on the mantle. Ventrally such birds are less fiery than *T. g. usambarae*, and the bill is longer and more slender and the tail longer (♂♀ 80–86 mm. in six specimens). For these populations Edgar Mearns (1913) has proposed the name *T. g. raineyi*, the *Type* being from Mt. Mbololo at 4400 ft. a.s.l., from which type-locality I have examined a series of six skins in the collection of the Coryndon Memorial Museum. The range of *T. g. raineyi* appears to be restricted to the forests of Mt. Mbololo and the Teita Range.

Isolated on another forested range of hills in southern Kenya Colony is the race *T. g. chyulu* (van Someren), described in 1939 from the Chyulu Mountains (hills). While the bulk of the paratypical series of twenty-two specimens is not now available in Africa, I have, nevertheless, been able to examine eight actual paratypes. I find that while *T. g. chyulu* is a fine "split" from *T. g. raineyi*, the race is valid one and worthy of recognition. Viewed under the most favourable conditions *T. g. chyulu* is found to be rather duller and greyer dorsally than *T. g. raineyi*, the cinnamon wash on the rump and upper tail-coverts vestigial in most specimens, while on the under-parts the Chyulu race is rather more yellowish. In the original description, van Someren laid much stress on other criteria, such as the reputedly buffish colouration of the under tail-coverts and a difference in the patterning of the ante-ocular surfaces, but even after the most painstaking study of many of the actual specimens used by van Someren, I am quite unable to appreciate these alleged differences. In *T. g. chyulu* the tail is again rather shorter (74–83 mm. in eight specimens)—a reversionary trend the significance of which is not appreciated at the present time.

In the forests of Mt. Kenya the most northerly in distribution of the populations of *T. gurneyi* are found. *T. g. chuka* (van Someren), described in 1930, the *Type* from Chuka on Mt. Kenya, is a very distinct form, with plumage colouration much as in *T. g. raineyi* and adjacent races, but differing from all others in its very large size (♂♀ wings 119–125, tail 88.5–90 mm.) and powerful bill. Another point to be observed in *T. g. chuka* is that the prominent white spots on the median– and secondary–coverts are as large as in the typical race.

From the discussion on the characters shown by the different populations of *T. gurneyi*, it is concluded that seven racial divisions can be recognised to advantage in our taxonomic arrangement. *T. gurneyi* would appear to be a species of tropical origin which penetrated far into southern Africa during a dispersal optimum, when suitable forests were more extensive and less fragmented in their distribution than at present. This supposition is supported by the fact that adults of the nominate race, which consists of the southern terminal populations, are completely without cinnamon

on the rump and upper tail-coverts, though this character is present in the juvenal state, whereas all tropical forms of the species have this salient plumage character in varying degree in the adult plumage. But the new knowledge that the northern and southern terminal populations are larger dimensionally and have larger white wing-spots than those of the five interposed forms, all of which have markedly shorter tails, complicates the preparation of any valid distributional history for the species at the present juncture.

In order to assist other systematic workers not equipped with material of all the described races of this highly localized species I have by means of the colour nomenclature of C. and J. Villalobos "Colour Atlas", 1947, attempted to give accurate dorsal and ventral colour diagnoses for each race recognised in this revision. The nomenclature, characters and ranges of the seven geographical races of the Orange Thrush *Turdus gurneyi* can be defined as follows:

1. *Turdus gurneyi gurneyi* Hartlaub.

Turdus gurneyi Hartlaub, "Ibis", 1864, p. 350, pl.9: Pietermaritzburg, Natal, South Africa.

Entire upper-parts brownish olive (about OOY–4–4°), the crown slightly darker than the back. Throat, breast, sides of the body and flanks orange-russet (about 0–11–9°); flanks with light olive wash; abdomen and under tail coverts white. Wings and tail as upper-parts; median- and secondary-coverts with white pyramidal spots.

Wing (flattened) ♂♀ 112–116 (113.1), culmen from base 23–25 (24.0), tail 86–93 (88.5) mm.

(Seven specimens measured).

Range: The larger pristine temperate evergreen forests of Pondoland and East Griqualand, eastern Cape Province, and in certain of the larger untouched interior forests of Natal and Zululand and the south-eastern Transvaal. Generally rare and highly localized throughout its entire range.

2. *Turdus gurneyi disruptans*, subsp. nov.

Lighter and browner, less greenish, dorsally than *T. g. gurneyi* (about 0–5–6°), and with the rump and upper tail-coverts strongly tinged with cinnamon-brown. On under-parts rather more intensely coloured (orange-russet about 0–8–10°), and with the white on the abdominal surfaces reduced; under tail-coverts strongly tinged with buff. Wings (primaries and secondaries) and tail more reddish, less greenish, brown.

White spots on median- and secondary-coverts smaller, and outer rectrices tipped with whitish. Smaller in size.

Wing (flattened) ♂♀ 106.5–109.5 (108.0), culmen from base 23.5–24 (23.8), tail 83–86.5 (84.8) mm.

(Three specimens measured).

Type: ♀, adult. Breeding. Vumba Highlands, near Umtali, eastern Southern Rhodesia, at 5500 ft. a.s.l. In evergreen forest. 20th January, 1946. Collected by C. W. Benson. In the collection of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria. T.M. No. 25820.

Range: Highland evergreen forests of the northern and north-eastern Transvaal and eastern Southern Rhodesia. Rare and little-known.

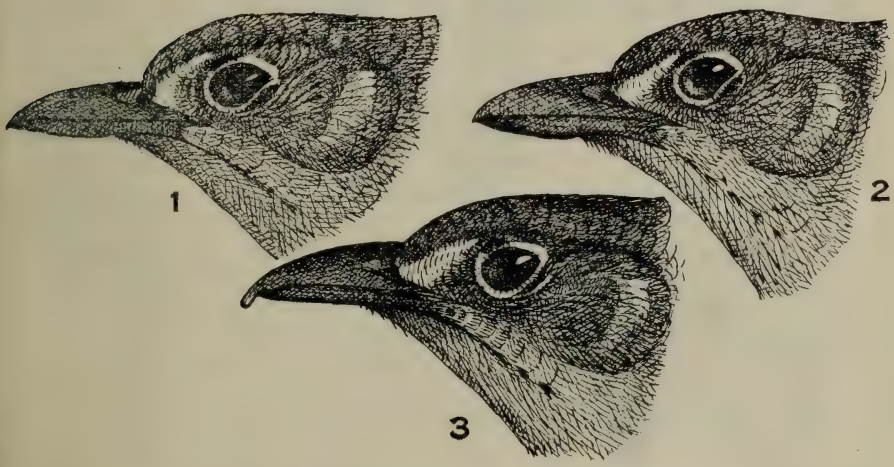
3. *Turdus gurneyi otomitrus* (Reichenow).

Geocichla gurneyi otomitra Reichenow, "Ornithologische Monatsberichte", vol. xii, 1904, p.55: Bulongwa, near Mwaya, Rungwe district, south-western Tanganyika Territory.

Differs from *T. g. disruptans* in having the head-top rather darker and greyer and not almost concolorous with the mantle, which is more saturated and somewhat greener (about 0–4–3°). Rump and upper tail-coverts more golden, less brownish, cinnamon (about 0–4–11°). Tail much shorter.

Wing (flattened) ♂♀ 103–112 (108.3), culmen from base 22.5–24 (23.2), tail 75–81 (77.8) mm.

(Eight specimens measured).

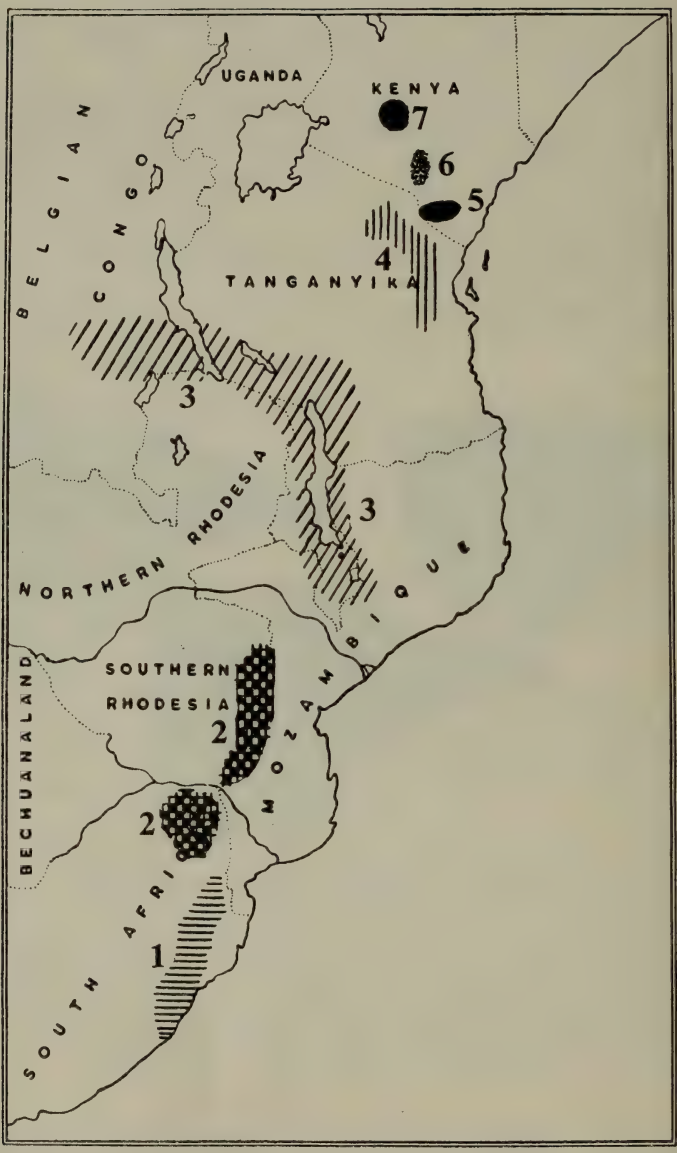


Heads of *Turdus gurneyi* showing geographical variation in the bills of certain East African races:

1. *T. g. otomitrus* (Reichenow)
2. *T. g. usambarae* (Neumann)
3. *T. g. chuka* (van Someren)

The heavy, less gradually tapered, bill of *T. g. usambarae* when compared with that of *T. g. otomitrus*, and the large bill of *T. g. chuka* should be observed.

Range: The forests of the southern highlands of Tanganyika Territory, southward to the montane forests of southern Nyasaland and adjacent Portuguese East Africa, and in the northern parts of its range west to the Katanga highlands (Upemba), Belgian Congo, and presumably in immediately adjacent parts of Northern Rhodesia. Usually at elevations of 4500 ft. a.s.l. and above, but according to Benson (1953, *loc. cit.*), occasionally in riverain forest at substantially lower altitudes.



Map of Eastern and South-eastern Africa showing geographical disposition of the races of *Turdus gurneyi*.

1. *T. g. gurneyi*
2. *T. g. disruptans*
3. *T. g. otomitrus*
4. *T. g. usambarae*
5. *T. g. raineyi*
6. *T. g. chyulu*
7. *T. g. chuku*

4. *Turdus gurneyi usambarae* (Neumann).

Geocichla gurneyi usambarae Neumann, "Journal für Ornithologie", 1920, p. 82: Mlala, near Amani, Usambara, north-eastern Tanganyika Territory.

Closely allied to *T. g. otomitrus*, but averaging slightly darker and richer on upper-parts, the head top darker and more ashen with scarcely any olive suffusion. More readily distinguishable ventrally. Orange-russet of throat, breast, sides of body and flanks darker and rather redder (about 0–8–12°); under tail-coverts usually buff. Bill more robust, less gradually tapered (*see figures*). Similar in size.

Wing (flattened) ♂♀ 106.5–111.5 (108.8), culmen from base 23–24 (23.3), tail 75.5–78 (77.1) mm.

(Three specimens measured).

Range: The forests of the Uluguru and Usambara Mountains, north-eastern Tanganyika Territory, and apparently north-westward to the montane forests of Mts. Meru and Oldeani (authority: Mackworth-Praed and Grant).

5. *Turdus gurneyi raineyi* (Mearns).

Geocichla gurneyi raineyi Mearns, "Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections", lxi, 10, 1913, p. 4: Mt. Mbololo, east of Mt. Kilimanjaro, south-eastern Kenya Colony, at 4400 ft. a.s.l.

From *T. g. usambarae* usually separable by being paler, less saturated, dorsally; head-top lighter, more olive, less dark ashen grey, and sharply demarcated from the mantle, which is of a rather more golden-brown shade (about OY–5–8°), especially on the lower hind portion of the neck; ear-coverts paler. On under-parts very similar, but orange-russet duller, less fiery; under tail-coverts usually white. Outer webs of primaries and secondaries slightly less reddish. Bill longer and more tapered. Tail longer.

Wing (flattened) ♂♀ 107–113.5 (110.2), culmen from base 24–24.5 (24.1), tail 80–86 (82.0) mm.

(Six specimens measured).

Range: The forests of Mt. Mbololo and the Teita Range, south-eastern Kenya Colony.

6. *Turdus gurneyi chyulu* (van Someren).

Geokichla gurneyi chyulu van Someren ,"Journal of the East Africa and Uganda Natural History Society", vol. xiv, 1939, p. 77: Chyulu Mountains, southern Kenya Colony, at altitudes of 5600 ft.–7200 ft. a.s.l. (No *Type* designated).

Slightly differentiated from *T. g. raineyi*, but constantly so. Viewed in perfect, even light duller, greyer and colder on upper-parts, and usually with less extensive and intense cinnamon-brown on rump and upper tail-coverts. Orange-russet of under-parts rather paler, more yellowish (about 0–9–11°), and the flanks are usually paler, less washed with olivaceous. Ear-coverts slightly darker. Tail averaging shorter.

Wing (flattened) ♂♀ 106–111.5 (108.7), culmen from base 23–24.5 (23.5), tail 74–83 (79.3) mm.

(Eight specimens measured).

Range: Restricted to the forests of the Chyulu Mountains, southern Kenya Colony.

7. *Turdus gurneyi chuka* (van Someren).

Geokichla gurneyi chuka van Someren, "Journal of the East Africa and Uganda Natural History Society", No. 37, 1930, p. 195: Chuka Mt. Kenya, Kenya Colony.

A well-defined race with dorsal plumage colouration much as in *T. g. raineyi* but ventrally similar to *T. g. chyulu*, and head-top even darker ashen grey than in *T. g. usambarae*. White spots on median- and secondary-coverts large, as in *T. g. gurneyi*. Size much larger than any other race, and with a pronouncedly longer bill (*see figures*).

Wing (flattened) ♂♀ 119–125 (121.8), culmen from base 26–26.5 (26.2), tail 88.5–90 (89.2) mm.

(Three specimens measured).

Range: The forests of Mt. Kenya, Kenya Colony.

Notes on South African Birds

by Mr. C. W. Mackworth-Praed & Captain C. H. B. Grant

Received 5th March, 1955

A new race of Lark from South Africa.

Under this description in the Bull., B.O.C. 75, p. 23, 1955, we unaccountably failed to give a reference to Mr. J. D. Macdonald's very useful and informative paper on the "Forms of the Red-cap Lark in Southern Africa" in the Annals Transv. Mus. 22, pp. 29–32, 1952.

On the type locality of Eremialector bicinctus.

In discussing this matter (Bull. B.O.C. 75, p. 24, 1955), we should have noted that Mr. J. D. Macdonald in the Bull. B.O.C., 74, p. 6, 1954, gives Gibeon on the Great Fish River as the provisional type locality. Since the publication of his note we have been studying Levaillant's Travels and in consequence of this research it seems certain that he did not reach or see the Great Fish River, but an eastern tributary of this river now known as the Leeu River, and which on his map by Laborde was carried westwards to the sea. We therefore consider it advisable to place the type locality of this species within the area that Levaillant could have travelled north of the Orange River.

On the genus Coracia Brisson, Orn., 1, p.30, 1760

by Mr. C. W. Mackworth-Praed and Captain C. H. B. Grant

Received 18th February, 1955

The genus *Coracia* of Brisson is a valid genus having been introduced with a description, but no type species can be established within Brisson's six volumes of his Ornithologie 1760, as his names are not considered as being binomial. This being so, his genera have had to be associated with a valid species name by subsequent authors.

The first author to associate a valid species name with the generic name *Coracia* Brisson, was Vieillot, N. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., 8, p. 2, 1817, who named the White-winged Chough of New Holland (New South Wales,

Australia), Le Coracias à Bec Noir, *Coracia melanoramphus*. He listed next the European Red-billed Chough, Le Coracias à Bec Rouge, *Coracia erythroramphus*; followed by Le Coracias tivouch, *Coracia cristata*. The type species of the genus is, therefore, the first named, *Coracia melanoramphus*.

The genus *Coracia* Brisson having been attached to the Australian White-winged Chough, *Coracia melanoramphus* Vieillot, it is not available for the Red-billed Chough of Europe, Asia and Africa, which should be placed in the genus *Pyrrhocorax* Tunstall, Orn. Brit., 1771.

Tringa totanus totanus in Northern Rhodesia

by Mr. John G. Williams

Received 15th April, 1955.

Through the courtesy of Mr. C. W. Benson I have had the opportunity of examining two specimens of redshank (*Tringa totanus*) collected recently in Northern Rhodesia. Both specimens are first winter males in rather worn plumage. The first of these was collected by Major J. R. Grimwood of the Game and Tsetse Department of Northern Rhodesia, on 12th October, 1954 at Kampinda, Mweru Marsh, Mporokoso district (8° 50′ S., 29° 41′ E.), altitude 3,000 feet. The second specimen was secured by Mr. Benson on 12th November, 1954 at the same place; collector's No. NR 4086. Mr. Benson saw a further specimen a month later in the same locality but was unable to collect it.

The bird secured by Major Grimwood has an exposed culmen of 40 and a wing measurement (flattened) of 157 mm. Mr. Benson's example has an exposed culmen of 42.5 and a wing of 155 mm. I have compared these two specimens with a series of each of the following races, *Tringa totanus totanus* (Linnaeus), *Tringa totanus eurhinus* Oberholser and *Tringa totanus terrignotae* Meinertzhagen, and find that both are clearly referable to the nominate race. They are too small in measurements to be referred to *eurhinus*, of which I have adequate material of juveniles and first winter birds, and much too dark and too heavily marked on the throat and breast to be *terrignotae*.

I should like to take this opportunity of commenting on the status of the redshank generally in Eastern Africa. In the "*African Handbook of Birds*", series 1, vol. 1, Messrs. Mackworth-Praed and Grant give two records of the nominate race for Tanganyika and then go on to make the surprising statement that *Tringa totanus eurhinus* is "a very common palaearctic winter visitor to the Red Sea and East Africa, occurring as far south as Beira and Durban". *T. t. eurhinus* may be a common winterer on the coasts of the Red Sea, but this is most certainly not the case in Eastern Africa generally, where in over ten years of field work I have found the redshank to be a rare visitor. I think it is probable that Messrs. Mackworth-Praed and Grant have been misled by published sight records of redshanks in East Africa, many of which are certainly based on misidentifications. In mentioning Beira specifically I feel they are referring to the record published in *The Ostrich* (vol. VII, No. 1, May 1936, p. 36) by Dr. J. M. Winterbottom, who stated that he found redshanks, presumably the

race *terrignotae*, the most numerous of all the waders at Beira during March: but they appear to have overlooked Mr. C. W. Benson's comments on this record (*Ostrich*, vol. VII, No. 2, December 1936, p. 117) when he suggests that the birds observed were terek sandpipers and not redshanks, and Dr. Winterbottom's reply, in a footnote to the same article, in which he says "Mr. Benson's very delightfully worded hint that I may have confused the redshank and the terek sandpiper is quite likely to be correct. I do not know the latter species at all".

Orange-legged examples of ruffs and reeves may also at times be mistaken for redshanks, and give rise to erroneous sight records. Twice in Kenya I have had my attention drawn to such specimens by quite competent ornithologists with the whisper "look at that redshank". Unless the evidence of collected specimens proves to the contrary the status of *Tringa totanus eurhinis* in Eastern Africa should be amended to "rare palaearctic winter visitor".

Further records of Waders in Northern Rhodesia

by Mr. C. W. Benson, Major I. R. Grimwood and Mr. P. I. R. Maclaren

Received 15th April, 1955

Reference the note by Mr. J. G. Williams immediately above, among many thousands of palaearctic-breeding waders observed by one or other of us on various occasions at Kampinda (in an approximately three-mile traverse of mud-flats), and elsewhere, during October–November, 1954, certain other species should also be mentioned, of which there is little or no record in White and Winterbottom's Northern Rhodesia Check List (1949). Other localities mentioned below are: Abercorn, 8° 52′ S., 31° 21′ E.; Chiengi, Lake Mweru, 8° 39′ S., 29° 10′ E.; Kasaba, Lake Tanganyika, 8° 31′ S., 30° 40′ E.; Mofu, Bangweulu Swamps, 11° 07′ S., 30° 20′ E.; Sumbu, Lake Tanganyika, 8° 30′ S., 30° 28′ E. All specimens collected, including the two redshanks, are in the National Museum, Bulawayo. The waders in question are:

Charadrius hiaticula tundrae (Lowe). Siberian Ringed Plover.

Collected at Kasaba, 6th October, Mofu, 19th October. A few seen at Kampinda, 12th October, where more numerous—perhaps as many as fifty—in November and December. Also four seen at Lake Chila, Abercorn, 23rd November.

Charadrius squatarola (Linn.). Grey Plover.

One seen at Kampinda, 18th November. One collected from a flock of five at Chiengi, 9th December. Also one still in full summer dress seen by P. I. R. Maclaren at Sumbu, 16th September, 1952.

Arenaria interpres interpres (Linn.). Turnstone.

Two collected at Kasaba, 6th October. Three seen at Kampinda, 12th October; likewise three near Sumbu, 11th October.

Recurvirostra avosetta (Linn.). Avocet.

Two seen at Kampinda, 12th October. Also one seen at Chiengi, 10th July, 1954.

Calidris testacea (Pallas). Curlew-Sandpiper.

Collected at Kampinda, 12th October, when a few others seen. More numerous in November and December (on 18th November, a flock of about 200 recorded), but not nearly so plentiful as *C. minuta*. Collected at Mofu, 19th October.

Crocethia alba (Pallas). Sanderling.

One collected from a flock of nine on a sand-beach at Kasaba, 6th October. Two collected at Kampinda, 12th October, and another seen; four also seen there, 12th November.

Xenus cinereus (Güld). Terek Sandpiper.

One collected at Kampinda, 12th October, and another seen.

Limosa lapponica lapponica (Linn.). Bar-tailed Godwit.

One collected at Kampinda, 12th October.

Numenius arquatus orientalis (Brehm).. Eastern Curlew.

Single birds, presumably this race, seen near Abercorn, 30th September; Sumbu, 11th October; Kampinda, 13th October.

In addition, the Caspian Plover (*Charadrius asiaticus* Pallas) was collected in the Mweru Marsh on 25th August and 10th October, 1954, and on the latter date about 100 were seen in all, coming in from the north in small flocks averaging about eight per flock. Also, on 18th March, 1955, one of us (C.W.B.) was again able to visit Kampinda, where due to shortage of rain the mud-flats were as exposed as previously. By far the most common species were Black-winged Stilts (*Himantopus himantopus* (Linn.)) and Ruffs (*Philomachus pugnax* (Linn.)). There were probably not less than 1,000 of each. Compared to previous visits, the number of the former was perhaps about the same, though the latter was probably only about one-tenth as numerous.

Finally, the opportunity is taken to record a specimen of the Mongolian Sand-Plover *Charadrius mongolus atrifrons* Wagler, collected at Malole, 10° 00′ S., 31° 35′ E.; in March, 1954, which Mr. Williams has kindly compared with specimens in the Coryndon Museum.

Behaviour of Ruffs in Northern Rhodesia

by Mr. P. I. R. Maclaren

Received 15th April, 1955

Further to the preceding note, at Kampinda at mid-day on 18th November, 1954, I noticed flocks several hundred strong of what I thought were phalaropes, swimming on the waters of the drying-up lake. I waded out a quarter of a mile and found that they were Ruffs, swimming in eighteen inches of water over the same depth of mud. They were energetically paddling to and fro, pecking left and right just as phalaropes do, and as far as I could see with the aid of binoculars were feeding on chironomid midges which were hatching in swarms at the time. I later noticed them feeding in shallower water, and this was in places just deep enough to allow the larger birds to wade while smaller ones had to swim. Feeding in this manner continued for at least two hours, but by evening the hatch of midges had ceased, and all the Ruffs were feeding normally on the exposed mud.

PURCHASED

The Identity of *Collocalia maxima* Hume

by Dr. H. G. Deignan

Received 3rd May, 1955

In course of study of the difficult genus *Collocalia* in the Indo-Chinese countries, I have investigated the status of the name *Collocalia maxima* Hume, which first appeared as a *nomen nudum* in *Stray Feathers* 4: 223, 1876, attached to two specimens from "Mergui, Bankasoon", Tenasserim.

Its next mention was in *Stray Feathers* 6: 49, 1878, where, under *Collocalia innominata* (No. "103 *ter*"), Hume remarked as follows: "In my list, S.F., IV., 223, I mentioned a *Collocalia* under the name of *Collocalia maxima*. I had then only two specimens from Tenasserim, adults, and did not recognise their identity with *C. innominata*, which was described, as it now appears, from an immature specimen. Having now obtained other specimens, old and young, male and female, I find that the Bankasoon birds are *innominata*". This statement is followed by a very full description wholly based upon adult skins from Tenasserim.

Hume's action of 1878 seems to have been generally overlooked, and *maxima* was next to appear in *Catalogue of Birds in the British Museum* 16: 503, 1892, where it was listed by Hartert, with citation from 1876, as a synonym of *innominata*, 1873, here fully described on a composite series of Hume's specimens from Tenasserim (seven) and the Andaman Islands (one).

Finally, Peters (*Check-list of Birds of the World* 4: 222, 1940) cites *Collocalia maxima* "Hume" Hartert, 1892, as a synonym of "*Collocalia* (*fuciphaga*?) *innominata* Hume".

I wish to deal with the identity of the true *Collocalia innominata* Hume, 1873 (Andaman Islands) in a separate paper, but it may here be categorically affirmed that *Collocalia innominata* Hume, 1873 (Andaman Islands) is not even conspecific with *Collocalia* "*innominata*" Hume, 1878 (Mergui, Bankasoon), and since the later name is a homonym of the earlier one, the name *maxima* Hume, 1878, its synonym based upon some of the same type specimens, becomes available for the Tenasserim series.

Hume did not specify the number of Tenasserim birds before him, but Hartert in 1892 listed five adult males and one adult female from Bankasoon, and one adult female from Mergui, all Davison-collected skins of the Hume Collection, all taken earlier than June 1878, all labelled by Hume himself as No. "103 *ter*", and therefore all to be considered as cotypes of *Collocalia* "*innominata*" (*maxima*) Hume, 1878 (Tenasserim). The seven, belonging to a single form, are still preserved in London, and four of them, courteously lent me by Mr. J. D. Macdonald, are now before me in Washington. They are unquestionably representative of the swiftlet currently known as *Collocalia lowi robinsoni* Stresemann (*Bull. Raffles Mus.* 6: 83 (*nomen nudum*!), 98, 1931).

This discovery necessitates some alterations in nomenclature as follows:

"*Collocalia lowi robinsoni* Stresemann, 1931" (Peters, *op. cit.*, p. 222) becomes *Collocalia maxima maxima* Hume, 1878.

"*Collocalia lowi lowi* (Sharpe), 1879" (Peters, *ibid.*) becomes *Collocalia maxima lowi* (Sharpe), 1879.

"*Collocalia lowi tichelmani* Stresemann, 1926" (Peters, *ibid.*) becomes *Collocalia maxima tichelmani* Stresemann, 1926.

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DINNERS AND MEETINGS FOR 1955

20th September, 18th October, 15th November, 13th December.

SEPARATES

Contributors who desire free copies of the Bulletin containing their notes should state so on their MS., otherwise these will not be ordered. These will be supplied up to a maximum of fifty.

PUBLICATION OF THE "BULLETIN"

Members who make a contribution at a Meeting should hand the MS. to the Editor at that Meeting. As the proofs will be corrected by the Editor, it is essential that the MS. should be correct and either typed or written very clearly with scientific and place names in block letters. The first mention of a scientific name should be spelt out in full, i.e., genus, specific name, racial name (if any), and author. Any further mention of the same name need only have the initial letter of the genus and no further mention of the author.

If no MS. is handed to the Editor at the Meeting, a note will be inserted mentioning the contribution.

BLACK AND WHITE ILLUSTRATIONS

The Committee have decided that in future the Club will pay for a reasonable number of black and white blocks at the discretion of the Editor. If the contributor wishes to have the blocks to keep for his own use afterwards, the Club will not charge for them, as has been done in the past.

Communications are not restricted to members of the British Ornithologists' Club, and contributions up to 1,500 words on taxonomy and related subjects will be considered from all who care to send them to The Editor, Dr. J. G. Harrison, "Merriewood", St. Botolph's Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Communications relating to other matters should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, N. J. P. Wadley, Esq., 14 Elm Place, London, S.W.7.

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PURCHASED

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Edited by
DR. JEFFERY HARRISON

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1955

BULLETIN
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BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

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Published: 1st October, 1955

The five hundred and forty-first meeting was held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, on Tuesday, 20th September, 1955, following a dinner at 6.30 p.m.

Chairman: COLONEL MEINERTZHAGEN

Members present: 25; Guests, 8; Total 33.

Sir Philip Manson-Bahr showed films of his recent visit to East Africa, an account of which follows:

East African Journey

A lifelong yearning to study the fauna of East Africa was gratified in October and November, 1954, when I was able to visit four of the most famous game parks in company with my son, who has worked in Kenya and Tanganyika for many years.

No one could fail to be impressed by the magic scenery of the Ngorongoro crater and the Serengeti Plains in Tanganyika. The three days I spent there were ideal and we saw all we were supposed to see, both on the crater rim and down below on the crater floor. What with the trumpetings of bull Elephants, lethargic black Buffalo bulls, Rhinoceri, Zebra, Wildebeeste, butterflies, flowers, trees, sketching and photography, there was little time for detailed ornithology. However well primed by Reichenow, Jackson, Mackworth-Praed and Grant, one could not help being overwhelmed by the multitude and variety of species.

It was not long before I was identifying the winter visitors which we had just left behind us at home — Tree Pipits, Spotted Flycatchers, Yellow Wagtails, European Swallows, Swifts and Kestrels were all there, consorting with the tropical avifauna and big game. In the primaeval forest I was so fortunate as to catch glimpses of Hartlaub's Lourie flitting, like some dazzling meteor between the trees. Then there were the multicoloured Augur Buzzards, Bateleur Eagles, Black Kites, Speckled Pigeon and so many others impossible to identify. On the crater bed itself and along the rushy margins and the stream which nurtures it, there is teeming bird-life. Here were Egyptian Geese, Sacred Ibis, Cattle Egret, Great White,

Black-capped and Grey Herons, Crowned Lapwings, Blacksmith Plover, Stilts, Avocets, Crowned Cranes, Kori Bustard, Yellow-billed Duck, South African and Hottentot Teal, in addition to many kinds of winter visiting waders, including Dunlin, Stints, Greenshank, Wood and Marsh Sandpiper, Ruffs and many others. An excursion beyond the bounds of the park after Guinea and Spurfowl brought us to a country inhabited by myriads of Wheatears, Wagtails and Kilimanjaro Stonechats. I need hardly also mention the ubiquitous Shrikes, Short-toed Larks and of course, Francolins.

During three days in Ambuseli Park at the foot of Kilimanjaro, Giraffe, Zebra, Rhinoceros and Lion constituted the main attraction, but there were also many duck and waders, Masai Ostrich in nuptial display, Crowned Cranes, Secretary Birds, Black-bellied Florican, Abyssinian and Common Rollers and three species of Bee-eater. It was quite a drive from Ambuseli to Tsavo along a 180 mile stretch, lined in some places with Guinea Fowl and Yellow-cheeked Spur Fowl. Here the scenery is on a grandiose scale with great kopjes glowing red in the evening light. Then there is the clear water of the Tsavo River and the pools of the Myzima springs. Here was the Coqui Francolin and Black-faced Sandgrouse, large numbers of Hornbills of at least three species and masses of Turtle Doves too difficult to identify. I also saw something of the White-bellied Go-away Bird, a rather offensive creature, and had a good view of the black African Peregrine. Then to Lake Naivasha with Williams of the Coryndon Museum for an ornithological feast. We saw South African Spoonbills, Great White and Purple Herons, Yellow-billed Storks, African Great-crested Grebes, African Coots and Duck, Egyptian Geese, Naivasha Pipits, Red-capped Calandrella and crowds of waders, among which was a flight of Black-tailed Godwits which apparently had not been seen before.

Finally we made a drive of nearly 700 miles to the Queen Elizabeth Park in Uganda, which from the scenic and faunist angle is the finest of all and we had the great good fortune to see Ruwenzori bathed in sunshine for three consecutive days. Here I made acquaintance with the South African Darter, the White-bellied and Long-tailed Pigmy Cormorants and White-headed Fish Eagle. Here too the Hagedash Ibis was much in evidence, trying to curdle my blood with its agonising wails. On Lake Edward I again ran into a flock of Black-tailed Godwits.

Perhaps the most attractive, picturesque and graceful of all the game are the herds of Uganda Cob which thrive in the valleys and around the crater lakes of this Royal Park. On Lakes George and Edward are great concourses of hirundines. There are so many species of African and European swallows, swifts and sand martins that it is a most difficult task to try to pick them out, but the Great Lakes Red-rumped Swallow was very conspicuous. Pied and Malachite Kingfishers were also to be seen. Finally there was Livingstone, the Zambesi and Victoria Falls where I saw Ospreys, Open-bill and Abdims Stork, besides the Lesser Hammerkop.

Space does not permit reference to the Weaver Birds, Glossy Starlings, Ant-chats, Paradise Flycatchers, White-eyes, Wax-bills, Mouse-birds, Honey-guides, Tick-birds, Wydah-birds and others without number.

The Burmese Races of *Turnix suscitator* (Gmelin)

by Mrs. B. P. Hall

Received 18th May, 1955.

Smythies in the new edition of the *Birds of Burma* (1953: 453) has remarked that a revision is needed of the Button Quail, *Turnix suscitator*, in Burma. The species was reviewed by Robinson and Stuart Baker in 1928 (*Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 48: 58), working chiefly on the collection in the British Museum: in 1946 Deignan (*Journ. Wash. Acad. Sci.* 36: 390), working on material in the United States, found reason to describe a new race from Siam, *Turnix suscitator thai* with which he associated a specimen from Myitkyina, Upper Burma. These two papers show some disparities so, at Mr. Deignan's suggestion, and through his kindness in lending me twenty specimens of *thai*, and through the kindness of Mr. de Schauensee of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, who lent me a specimen from Chiang Mai, northern Siam, I have been able to assemble together a large proportion of the specimens on which two earlier papers were based: in addition there is in the British Museum some fresh material from Burma collected by Lt.-Col. J. K. Stanford, Mr. P. F. Garthwaite and Mr. H. C. Smith in Burma and the late Sir Walter Williamson in Siam. From this it seems possible to reconcile the apparent differences of the two previous studies.

The degree of individual variation found in Button Quails makes attempts to name single birds unsatisfactory and races can only be separated on general characters shown by a reasonably large series. Furthermore some races show considerably more individual variation than others: I have therefore here only attempted to describe the general colour characters and indicate the amount of variation shown. I find five races in Burma, as follows:

1. *Turnix suscitator plumbipes* (Hodgson): Nepal.

Character—Predominantly a dark race, showing a considerable amount of variation. The upper-parts of the males are fundamentally brown or grey-brown and not usually heavily patterned, some individuals showing quite a lot of rufous. The females are more heavily patterned and seem more sharply divided into red and grey phases. On the underparts the flanks in both sexes are a richer buff than in any of the other Burmese races.

Range—Nepal, Sikkim, Assam and Upper Burma to Myitkyina.

The specimen from Myitkyina referred by Deignan to *thai* is greyer than most others of *plumbipes* but five others from there collected by Stanford are easily matched with Indian specimens.

2. *T. s. blakistoni* (Swinhoe): Canton, China.

Character—A very rufous race, heavily patterned in both males and females. Less variable than most races, only two specimens from the Shan States being atypical, both being rather plain-backed and generally brown in tone. Burmese birds average rather richer coloured on the flanks than those from China, and more orange-red on the backs, but the differences are too small to warrant separating the Burmese population under a new name.

Range—South China, Tonkin, Shan States, extreme northern Tenasserim (Thaungyin), extreme north-western Siam (Doi Suthep, Chiang Mai). The last two districts are included on the evidence of single specimens, the Thaungyin bird being a male in the British Museum and the Doi Suthep bird the "uniquely rufescent specimen . . . taken at Chiang Mai" referred to by Deignan in his paper, and now in Philadelphia. Robinson and Stuart Baker suggest that the populations of *blakistoni* in Burma and South China are linked through Yunnan but I have no evidence of this, the single "Yunnan" specimen in the British Museum proves to have been incorrectly labelled and to have come from Tawnio, N. Shan States. If there is a continuous distribution it seems more likely to be along the Burma-Siam border and through Tonkin, where typical *blakistoni* is found breeding at Ngoi-Toi.

Specimens from all Indo-China except Cambodia have been referred to this race by Delacour and Jabouille (*Oiseau* 1940: 109), but of six specimens in the British Museum from Central and Southern Annam only one, a female from Dran, shows an approach to *blakistoni*; one from Kontoum can be matched with *thai*; the other three from Kontoum and Phanrang are less rufous than *blakistoni* and less grey than *thai*. Deignan also found both *blakistoni* and *thai* among five specimens from southern Annam. There is clearly an unstable population here which, in the absence of more material, I prefer to leave under the designation *T. s. blakistoni thai*.

3. *T. s. pallescens* Robinson and Baker: Thayetmyo, Central Burma.

Character—A pale race, predominantly reddish rather than grey and lightly patterned in both sexes. Not very variable but with occasional individuals showing an approach to *blakistoni*.

Range—Central Burma, Thayetmyo, Pegu, Tounghoo, Yamethin, Mandalay, and Chin Hills. Robinson and Baker included the Chin Hills in the range of *plumbipes* but the two females before me, from Mount Victoria and Falam, seem best placed here.

4. *T. s. thai* Deignan: Nong Boraphet, central Siam.

Character—A grey race, often heavily patterned in the females but not in the males. There is more variation in the amount of patterning than in the colour of the upper parts which is always between grey brown and grey. A male from Chiang Mai, collected in the vicinity of the town, and two out of three specimens from Ban Mae Sa-riang, on the border of Siam and Burma (lat. 18° 10′ N., long. 97° 55′ E.) show an approach to *blakistoni* in having the grey-brown of the backs mixed with rufous, but are not nearly so richly coloured as typical *blakistoni*.

Range—Siam, north of the Isthmus of Kra, Cochin China, and central and northern Tenasserim.

The inclusion of Tenasserim in the range of this race is based on three specimens in the British Museum, from Kaukaryit, Attaran River, and Tavoy, all of which match Siam birds well. It is apparent that the Burma-Siam boundary is the meeting place of *blakistoni* and *thai* and only further collecting will establish where the racial boundary lies exactly; in Burma they have been found very close to each other at Thaungyin and Kaukaryit, and again in Siam in the Chiang Mai area.

5. *T. s. atrogularis* (Eyton): Malacca.
(synonym *T. s. interrumpens* Robinson and Baker: Kossoom, (Ban Krasom) Pen. Siam).

Character—A brownish race, fairly heavily patterned in the females but not in the males. Less red than *pallescens*, less grey than *thai*.

Range—Malay States and Peninsular Siam, north to the Isthmus of Kra; extreme southern Tenasserim (Bankasoon.).

I agree with Diegnan that birds from Peninsular Siam lack the greyness typical of *thai* and cannot be separated from those of the Malay States.

Zoological Results of the 'Daily Mail' Himalayan Expedition 1954. Two New Birds from Khumbu, Eastern Nepal [1]

by Dr. Biswamoy Biswas

Received 12th April, 1955

As a member of the Himalayan Expedition organized by the "*Daily Mail*" of London during January–June 1954, I had the opportunity to make a small collection of birds in high altitudes of Khumbu, eastern Nepal (*ca.* 10,000 to 19,000 ft.) in the vicinity of Mount Everest. A preliminary study of the collection has revealed the presence of two birds so far not known to science. As the detailed report on the collection will take some time to appear, they are herein described.

Thanks are due to the authorities of the Bombay Natural History Society for affording me facilities to compare my material with theirs.

Troglodytes troglodytes kinneari new subspeices

Type: Z.S.I. Reg. No. 27490; adult male; Thammu (*ca.* 12,500 ft.), Bhote Kosi Valley, Khumbu, Nepal; 7 March, 1954; B. Biswas collector. Deposited in the Zoological Survey of India, Indian Museum, Calcutta.

Description: This subspecies is characterized by being the darkest of all the known Himalayan races of the species. In addition, it differs from the adjacent *nepalensis* by having the tail and bill longer, and in the reduction of the loral spots; and from *tibetana* by having the wing and tail shorter, and by being rufous (not grey) on the underside.

Measurements (in millimeters):

		Wing	Tail	Bill from skull
T. t. kinneari	1♂ (TYPE)	54	34	15
T. t. nepalensis	3♂	50, 52, 53	30, 31, 32	13, 14, —
(Darjeeling Dist. & Sikkim. Alt. : 9,000–12,000 ft.)	3♀	48, 49, 50	29.5, 30, 31	13, 13.5, 14
	1—	49.5	30	14
T. t. tibetana	*1— (TYPE)	59.5	38	
(Khamba Dzong, Tibet. Alt. :? 15,000ft.)				

*Approximate measurements. *Ex* Walton, Bull.B.O.C. 15;93, 1905–given in inches.

1 Published by permission of the Director, Zoological Survey of India.

RANGE: Khumbu, eastern Nepal.

REMARKS: Kinnear (Ibis (11)4: 506, 1922) in his report on the collection of birds made by the First Mt. Everest Expedition from Tibet, in an area across the Himalaya to the north-east of the present working zone, rightly remarked on the single immature specimen that "it is very much darker than *T. nipalensis* of about the same age, and without doubt belongs to an undescribed form."

This new wren is named for Sir Norman Kinnear who has been associated with Indian Ornithology for a very long time and who first recognized the distinctness of this bird.

Parus dichrous izzardi, new subspecies.

TYPE: Z.S.I. Reg. No. 27491; adult male; Thammu (*ca.* 12,000 ft.), Bhote Kosi Valley, Khumbu, Nepal; 2 April, 1954; B. Biswas collector. Deposited in the Zoological Survey of India, Indian Museum, Calcutta.

DESCRIPTION: Similar to nominate *dichrous* of Darjeeling and Sikkim, but has a darker grey on the upper side, brown on head restricted to the extreme forehead, brown deeper on the upper side, and a much longer tail. Differs from *kangrae* (Whistler, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.*, 53: 20–21, 1932) of the western Himalaya in being much darker and purer grey on the upper side, and in having a much longer tail.

MEASUREMENTS:

		Wing	Tail	Bill from skull
P. d. izzardi	1♂ (TYPE)	74	51	—
P. d. dichrous	3♂	70, 71, 71	46, 48, 48	11, 11, 11
(Darjeeling Dist. & Sikkim)	1♀	67	47	—
P. d. kangrae	1♂	73	46	11
(W. Himalaya)	2♀	66, 68	43, 46	11, 11
	* 5 ♂	67.5–71	45.5–47	10.5–11
	* 5♀	65.5–67.5	43–46.5	11.5–12

* *ex* Whistler (*op. cit.*, p. 21).

RANGE: Khumbu, eastern Nepal.

REMARKS: Blyth (*J. Asiat. Soc. Bengal*, 13: 943, 1844) in his description of *Parus dichrous* from Hodgson's specimen taken in "Nepal, the Cachar" region, gave the colour of the upper parts as "uniform brownish-grey" and not pure grey. The type locality of *P. d. dichorus* may now be fixed in the high altitude areas of north-central Nepal.

This new tit is named for my friend Mr. Ralph Izzard, the chief organizer of the Expedition.

On the Type-Locality of *Gallirex porphyreolophus* (Vigors), 1831

by Mr. P. A. CLANCEY

Received 29th April, 1955.

In the "*Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*", 1830–1831, part 1, pp. 92–93, it is recorded that "Mr. N. A. Vigors exhibited a collection of African Birds which had been presented to the Society by

Henry Ellis, Esq., of Portland Place. They consisted of about one hundred and thirty species, many of them of extreme rarity and value, and a great portion unknown to the cabinets of England. They came immediately from Algoa Bay; but were supposed to have been collected far in the interior of the country''. Among the nine species described at the meeting (held on 14 June, 1831) was the Purple-crested Turaco *Gallirex porphyreolophus* (Vigors), a species not nowadays known to occur anywhere near Algoa Bay in the southern Cape Province of South Africa. Sir Andrew Smith, ''*Illustrations of the Zoology of South Africa*'', Aves, 1849, pl. xxxv (text), states of *G. porphyreolophus* that ''This species, as far as I know, has only yet been found towards Port Natal'', *i.e.* Durban, Natal. Sclater, in Stark and Sclater, ''*Birds of South Africa*'', vol. iii, 1903, p. 218, adequately summarizes the knowledge up to the date of writing: ''I do not know on what authority Layard makes his statement (*i.e.* that the range of *G. porphyreolophus* extends to the forests of Knysna), for no other collector, such as Levaillant, Victorin, or Andersson obtained it there, *nor have I any notice of its occurrence further east in the* (*Cape*) *Colony*''. Sclater, ''*Systema Avium Æthiopicarum*'', part i, 1924, p. 194, extends the range of nominate *G. porphyreolophus* ''to Natal, and perhaps to the eastern Cape Province'', while both Roberts, ''*Birds of South Africa*'', 1940, p. 137, and Vincent, ''*Check List of the Birds of South Africa*'', 1952, p. 39, aver that it occurs at least in the eastern Cape Province as well as Natal in the south of its sub-continental range.

The evidence detailed above is highly conflicting. From enquiries recently made it would appear that there are no specimens of this Turaco from areas to the south of Natal in South African collections, and I can trace no record of its occurrence in the Cape Province in the literature which has appeared since Sclater's comments of 1903. It has never been recorded from the great coastal forests of Pondoland, immediately contiguous to and south of Natal, in which area the Knysna Turaco *Tauraco corythaix corythaix* (Wagler) is widespread and numerous. Even in southern Natal it becomes increasingly scarce as one approaches the Pondoland border. While both *G. p. porphyreolophus* and *T. c. corythaix* do occur in the same localities (notably at Ifafa, near Scottburgh, and at Umdoni) on the south coast of Natal, the two species of Turacos tend to replace one another, because *T. c. corythaix* retreats inland to cooler and more elevated regions and *G. p. porphyreolophus* becomes dominant in the Natal littoral before Durban is reached. From just south of Durban northwards to Lake St. Lucia in Zululand no race of *T. corythaix* occurs in the coastal areas of Natal and Zululand, the common Turaco of the region being *G. p. porphyreolophus*.

The evidence now gathered tends to support the views of the earlier writers that *G. p. porphyreolophus* does not occur south of Natal, and it would appear that most of the statements to the contrary have resulted from a too strict literary interpretation of the scanty information given by Vigors, *loc. cit.*, as to the provenience of the entire Henry Ellis collection. The inclusion in the collection of a specimen of the extremely localized Spotted Forest Thrush *Turdus fischeri natalicus* Grote, described by Vigors at the meeting of 14 June, 1831, as *Turdus guttatus*, and which was at that time known only from Natal, suggests that a portion of the material

commented on by Vigors was certainly obtained in Natal, probably near Port Natal—the present Durban. Sir Andrew Smith was the first authority after Vigors to list a definite locality for *G. p. porphyreolophus*, and as this is supported by the historical and distributional facts now available, I would recommend that the type-locality of *Gallirex porphyreolophus porphyreolophus* (Vigors), 1831, be amended from "Inland of Africa from Algoa Bay", to "Durban, Natal".

I am grateful to the Directors of the South African Museum, Cape Town, the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria, and the Albany Museum, Grahamstown, for assistance in connection with this enquiry.

Five new subspecies from the mountains of Guadalcanal (British Solomon Islands)

Dr. A. J. Cain and Mr. I. C. J. Galbraith

Received 29th April, 1955

On the Oxford University (Department of Zoology) Expedition to the Solomon Islands, we collected the following new forms in the mountains of Guadalcanal. All were taken between 30th July and 20th August 1953, by native hunters working from Turipava, a camp at 4,100 feet by aneroid altimeter; all are apparently confined to the mist forest, above about 3,500 feet. A full account of the expedition will be published elsewhere, and the types will be deposited at the British Museum (Natural History). We are deeply indebted to Dr. D. Amadon of the American Museum of Natural History, who compared our specimens with the unique material of the Whitney-Rothschild collections and most generously allows us to publish from his notes, and to Professor E. Mayr for his comments.

1. *Coracina caledonica amadonis* new subspecies.

Description: nearest to the other Solomons races—*welchmanni* (Tristram 1892), *kulambangrae* Rothschild and Hartert 1916, and *bougainvillei* (Mathews 1928)—but much darker; even the female darker than the males of the other forms, with blacker under tail-coverts. Female with dull black lores, auriculars, chin and throat, and greyish black breast-shield. Male with black of head extending over nape and upper back, belly almost as black as breast-shield. Agrees with the other Solomons races in being strongly dimorphic; but clearly distinct in the posterior extension of black on the breast of the female and the nape of the male. (Comparative description from notes by Dr. Amadon, and from the literature).

Type: Expedition No. 459; adult female (some oocytes enlarged); 16th August.

Soft Parts: Feet and bill black, iris dark red–brown.

Measurements: Weight ♂ 133.5, 136.0 gm.; ♀ 165.0 gm. Wing ♂ 176.0, 180.0 mm.; ♀ 173.0 mm. Tarsus ♂ 28.5, 29.5 mm.; ♀ 28.5 mm. Culmen ♂ 35.0, 36.5 mm.; ♀ 38.5 mm. Bill depth ♂ 13.0, 14.0 mm.; ♀ 14.0 mm.

Owing to the dense and loose plumage of the rump, it would damage the skins to measure the tails of these campephagids.

Named after Dr. Dean Amadon of the American Museum of Natural History, who gave us essential help in describing these forms.

2. *Cichlornis whitneyi turipavae* new subspecies.

Description: Like *C. whitneyi* Mayr 1933 (mountains of Santo, New Hebrides) but darker—more sepia brown, less ruddy brown, above and below, especially on breast and throat; tail blackish above and below. Tail probably longer, perhaps with spinier shafts; nasal operculum apparently more inflated, with slitlike nostril extending to anterior end of nasal depression.

Type: Expedition No. 448; male (testes small); 15th August.

Soft Parts: Feet fuscous brown, bill blackish with whitish streaks on mandible and pale dull yellow gape, iris dark brown.

Measurements: See TABLE I.

Remarks: The unique type was compared by Dr. Amadon with the type of *whitneyi*, and by us with a series of three females and one male collected on Santo by T. Harrison and A. J. Marshall between 1933 and 1935. Apart from the difference in colour, the resemblance is close. Measurements (TABLE I.) give no basis for separation, except perhaps in tail length.

TABLE I.—Comparative measurements of *Cichlornis w. whitneyi* Mayr and *C. w. turipavae* new subspecies. Measurements of type of *C. w. whitneyi* quoted from Mayr (1933).

	turipavae	*whitneyi*				
		B.M. (N.H.) Nos. 35/10/22–				
	Type ♂	Type ♂	409 ♂	408 ♀	410 ♀	411 ♀
Weight, gm.	36.0	—	—	—	—	—
Wing, mm.	65.5	72	68.5	63.0	60.0	64.5
Tail, mm.	76.5+	70+	65.0	57.0+	56.5+	68.0
Tarsus, mm.	27.5	28	27.0	25.5	26.0	25.0
Culmen, mm.	—	21	20.0	20.0	19.5	18.5
Bill depth, mm.	5.0	—	—	—	—	4.5
Middle toe with claw, mm.	24.0	27	22.0	22.0	20.0	21.0
Hind toe with claw, mm.	20.5	21	18.5	16.5	16.5	17.5
Distances (mm.) between:						
First and longest primary	21.0	24	21.5	24.0	21.0	21.5
Longest primary and secondary	5.0	8	5.0	7.0	7.5	8.0
Longest and shortest rectrices	36.5	38	30.0	—	27.0	38.5

According to Mayr (1933, 1944) and Amadon (*in litt.*), *Cichlornis* is one of a group of geographically representative "genera", including *Büttikoferella* (Timor), *Ortygocichla* (New Britain), *Trichocichla* (Fiji) and *Megalurulus* (New Caledonia); and perhaps *Eremiornis* and others in Australia. Before any of these can be combined, this section of the warblers must be revised. *Cichlornis* agrees best with *Ortygocichla* in its rich

dark colouration and relatively short tail, and the rump feathers appear to be intermediate in softness, length and density between those of *Ortygocichla* and the other genera. However, *Cichlornis* is distinguished from the rest by its very narrow and pointed tail feathers, with spiny shafts (not due to wear).

3. *Turdus poliocephalus sladeni* new subspecies.

Description: Like *kulambangrae* Mayr 1941 in colour, but somewhat larger and with longer tail. In size and proportions like *bougainvillei* Mayr 1941, but blacker. (Description from notes by Dr. Amadon) and from the literature.) The three races from the mountains of the Solomons are all brownish black (not sooty black like *samoensis*) and uniformly coloured, without pale or rufous markings on the head or round the vent of adults.

Type: Expedition No. 544; adult male (testes enlarged); 20th August.

Soft Parts: Feet yellow with shins and claws fuscous-tinged, bill and eyelid yellow, iris dark brown.

Measurements: ♂ adults—weight 57.0, 59.0 gm.; wing 107.0, 110.0 mm.; tail 82.0, 87.0 mm.; tarsus 30.5, 31.0; mm. culmen 23.0, 23.5 mm.; bill depth 6.5, 7.0 mm. ♂ juveniles—weight 64.0, 67.5 gm.; wing 110.0, 111.5 mm.; tail 84.5 (2) mm.; tarsus 31.5 (2) mm.; culmen 24.0, 24.5 mm.; bill depth 7.0 mm. Unsexed juvenile—weight 61.0 gm.; wing 105.0 mm.; tail 81.0 mm.; tarsus 30.0 mm.; culmen 23.5 mm.; bill depth 7.0 mm.

Remarks: The type has a few dull brown edges to feathers on the belly, while the other adult (testes slightly enlarged) has these pale edges better developed and scattered over most of the underside, and rather pale shafts to many feathers. These juvenile characters are more conspicuous in the younger specimens.

Named after the Percy Sladen Trustees, who supported the expedition most generously.

4. *Zoothera margaretae turipavae* new subspecies.

Description: Like *Z. margaretae* Mayr 1935, but smaller; legs and feet blackish, not whitish; upperparts much darker, more blackish brown; spots on upper-wing coverts ochraceous (as in *Z. dauma* subspecies), not white; no buffy subterminal spots on tertials; white patch on wing much smaller and washed with buff; flanks darker and greyer; dark edges to feathers of underparts greyer, wider and less distinct, contrasting less with pale centres; under tail-coverts buffy, not white as in all but one specimen of *Z. margaretae*.

Type: Expedition No. 485; male (testes small); 18th August.

Soft Parts: Feet greyish fuscous with paler and greyer joints and ivory claws, bill black with greyish base and dull orange gape, iris very dark brown.

Measurements: Weight 53.5 gm.; wing 90.5 mm.; tail 63.5 mm.; tarsus 36.5 mm.; culmen 24.5 mm.; bill depth 6.5 mm.

Remarks: The unique type has indications of black edges to the feathers of the back, and an ochraceous wash next to the dark edges of the underparts. These characters are shown by juveniles of *Z. m. margaretae*, but our specimen shows little or no sign of the light centres on forehead and nape mentioned by Mayr (1936) as another juvenile character.

5. '*Petroica multicolour dennisi* new subspecies.

Description: Like *polymorpha* Mayr 1934, but females with crown darker (more olive brown) and back more blackish. Males not separable from black-headed phase of *polymorpha*, but apparently not polymorphic. (Description from notes by Dr. Amadon and from specimens.)

Type: Expedition No. 520; adult female (egg in oviduct); 19th August.

Soft Parts: Feet orange-brown, scutes more or less washed with fuscous (especially on toes and lower shins), claws nearly black, soles orange-yellow; bill black above, mandible more fuscous, with pale base, gape dull yellow; iris dark brown.

Measurments: ♂ adults—weight 10.0 (3), 10.5, 11.0 (2) gm.; wing 62.5 (2), 63.0, 64.0, 64.5 (2) mm.; tail 39.5, 41.5, 42.0, 43.0, 44.5 mm.; tarsus 16.5 (2), 17.5 (2), 18.0 mm.; culmen 13.5 (2), 14.0 (2), 14.5 mm.; bill depth 3.5, 4.0 (2), 4.5 mm. ♂ (retarded plumage)—weight 10.5 (2), 11.0 gm.; wing 60.5, 61.5, 66.0 mm.; tail 41.5, 42.0 mm.; tarsus 17.0, 17.5 mm.; culmen 14.0 (2) mm.; bill depth 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 mm.; ♀ adults—weight 11.0, 11.5, 14.5 gm.; wing 62.0 (2), 62.5 mm.; tail 41.0, 42.5 (2) mm.; tarsus 17.0 (3) mm.; culmen 14.0 (3) mm.; bill depth 4.0 (2) mm.; ♀ juvenile—weight 10.0 gm.; wing 62.5 mm.; tail 42.5 mm.; tarsus 17.5 mm.; culmen 14.0 mm.; bill depth 3.0 mm.

Remarks: The Whitney Expedition collected 13 males of *polymorpha* on San Cristobal, of which 7 are in the red-headed and 6 in the black-headed phase. We have 10 males (one too damaged to be sexed but clearly an adult male), all of which are in the black-headed phase: 6 are in the adult plumage with black crown and white forehead, 3 in the retarded plumage with dull brown head.
Named after Mr. G. T. C. Dennis, naturalist, who gave us invaluable help and advice on Guadalcanal.

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On Genetic Instability in *Budytes flavus* (L) in North-West England

by Mr. Alfred Hazelwood and Mr. Eric Gorton

Received 5th May, 1955.

A series of *Budytes flavus* (L) in the Bolton Museum, all from South Lancashire, exhibits a polymorphism which denotes an unusual degree of genetic instability.

Three principal variant phenotypes may be defined but all are linked by intermediate forms so that almost continuous variation is exhibited. The skins have been acquired more or less at random through the years but an occasional striking variant may have been deliberately collected and the series cannot on that account be regarded as quantitatively typical of the local population and considered statistically. Field examination, however, of hundreds of birds as they arrive at the breeding grounds and on the sprinkler beds of sewage farms reveals no truly dominant, well defined and constant phenotype.

The three best defined phenotypes are as follows:

(*a*) The dilute phase. In these examples, the green of the mantle and crown is almost completely replaced by pale grey, faintly suffused with citreous green. The rump is bright green in contrast, the forehead suffused with pale Naples yellow but not sharply defined, merging into the grey of the crown. The underparts are a pale Naples yellow, slightly tinged with lemon on the breast and flanks.

The eyestripe in this form is pale creamy yellow, the lores and ear-coverts greyish olive.

(*b*) The green-headed phase. This corresponds with the race *flavissima* (Blyth) as defined by Grant and Mackworth-Praed (1952).

The forehead and crown are concolorous with each other and with the mantle. The underparts are bright chrome, the lores and ear-coverts are dark olive with an admixture of yellow feathers; the eyestripe is bright yellow and well defined on either margin.

(*c*) The "lutino" phase . This resembles closely the race "*Lutea*" (Gmelin) of Grant and Mackworth-Praed. The forehead is a bright yellow which extends to the crown, merges into the hind-neck and washes even the mantle. The underparts are a deeper chrome yellow. The lores and ear coverts retain a few olive feathers but the yellow is still pervasive. The eyestripe is bright yellow, merges into the crown and is defined only behind the eye.

It must be reiterated that these are extreme forms, possibly homozygotes for one or more pairs in a series or series of multiple alleles. The bulk of the population is more than usually variable and not more than 50% of the material available can be included in a series showing a normal degree of specific conformity. These birds fall about midway between phases (*b*) and (*c*).

One startling specimen is indicative of a greater possible range of variability since, in addition to tonal variation, the normal colour pattern is

disrupted. It has the head, neck and mantle of the brightest green, the scapulars and back have an admixture of grey feathers, and the rump is grey. The eyestripe is yellow and well defined. The underparts have a median strip, from chin to lower belly, of bright sulphur yellow; sides of breast and flanks are pale creamy yellow with green and gold fringes. The under-tail coverts are pale cream, the under wing-coverts white. This bird was not in moult.

Although this study is confined to a very local population, it seems probable, from recent literature on the species in Britain, that this polymorphism prevails over much of the range of *Budytes flavus flavissimus*. Although the selective value of colour and colour pattern appears to be relatively low throughout the species, it is perhaps remarkable that variation should be so manifest in what is a peripheral zone of the species, especially since it seems to be undergoing some distributional recession. One feature which may be indicative is the frequency with which divergent birds occur from time to time in the same locality. This may argue a high degree of homing fidelity in the breeding season which not only allows all the races to maintain their discreteness while sharing common winter quarters but also accounts in some measure for the relative frequency of homozygotes with atypical characteristics.

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On a probable *Tringa alpina sakhalina* (Vieillot) in England

by Mr. ALFRED HAZELWOOD and Mr. ERIC GORTON

Received 5th May, 1955.

A female Dunlin *Tringa alpina* Linn. picked up dead at Redcar, Yorks., on 3rd December, 1954, and forwarded to us by the courtesy of Miss M. M. Kershaw of the Middlesborough Museum, struck us at once as differing markedly from either *T. alpina alpina* Linn. or *T. a. schinzii* Brehm in winter plumage. It is appreciably darker ash-grey on the back and has the hind-neck entirely concolorous with the crown. On the ventral surface, the white of the throat is more restricted and the lower throat and chest are more strongly suffused and clouded with ashy-grey which extends for some distance down the sides of the breast. The wing measures 120 mm and the bill, from feathers, 37mm.

Although some of the characteristics enumerated above are not noted for *T. a. sakhalina* (Vieillot) in either Sharpe[1] or Witherby[2], we found them quite evident in birds in equivalent plumage which Dr. J. M. Harrison was kindly able to provide from W. North America and from Japan. In view of the other waders which cross the Atlantic from time to time, it seems reasonable to assume that the Dunlin is quite capable of doing so.

It must be remarked that we have, in the Bolton Museum collection, several *T. alpina* from the east coast of England which are long in wing and bill (♂♂ 113–116 mm., 32–37 mm.; ♀♀ 118–123 mm., 36–40 mm.) but which otherwise conform with the typical race of which they are perhaps extreme eastern examples.

The amount of white on the secondaries varies so much individually

that we cannot regard it as diagnostic. In the Redcar specimen it agrees with what might be termed the average bird from the Pacific coasts, some of which have as little white as British taken examples.

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The Names of the Races of Pompadour Pigeon, *Treron pompadora* (Gmelin), in Java and Celebes

by Mr. R. W. SIMS and Miss R. M. L. WARREN

Received 25th May, 1955.

There appears to be some confusion regarding the names of the representatives of *Treron pompadora* (Gmelin) in Java and Celebes. Riley (1924) observed that the name *Treron griseicauda* G. R. Gray, 1856, given to the Javanese bird was a *nomen nudum* for Gray merely listed it as "*Treron griseicauda* G. R. Gray MSS." and referred to a specimen which was subsequently regarded as the type. Riley was of the opinion the name of the bird should be *Treron pulverulenta* given by Wallace in 1863 when he described the Pompadour Pigeon from Java, but Riley apparently overlooked Bonaparte (1854). Bonaparte described a pigeon—"Java and Borneo"—which he believed was *Columba aromatica* Gmelin; under this name he gave the synonyms "*Toria aromatica* Blyth" and "*Treron griseicauda* Gr. Mus. Brit. 1854". The description, however, did not apply to either *C. aromatica* Gmelin or *T. aromatica* Blyth, nor to any bird described at that date. The name *Treron grisecauda* was taken from an unpublished G. R. Gray manuscript and, therefore, becomes the name of the bird described by Bonaparte—the *aromatica* of both Gmelin and Blyth having been misapplied. The name of this Javanese pigeon is *Treron griseicauda* Bonaparte, 1854, not of Gray because Bonaparte was the first person to publish the name.

Bonaparte restricted the bird to Java and Borneo, the first named being regarded as typical, this is important because the birds from Java are racially distinct from those of other islands such as Celebes. Wallace (1863*a*), however, described a pigeon from Celebes as "*Treron griseicauda* G. R. Gray"; then later in the same year (1863*b*) gave a new name, *Treron pulverulenta*, to another specimen from Java which he described in comparison with his own specimen from Celebes. Salvadori (1893) realised that Wallace had made a mistake and placed *T. pulverulenta* in the synonymy of *T. griseicauda* G. R. Gray. At the same time he gave the name *wallacei* to the Celebes bird which was without a name because Wallace had erroneously identified it as *griseicauda*.

Because of Riley's observations Peters (1937) listed these pigeons as:

(1) *Treron pompadora pulverulenta* Wallace, 1863.—Java.

(2) *Treron pompadora griseicauda* Wallace, 1863.—Celebes.

It seems, however, that the nomenclature should be much as it was before 1924. Incidently, Hartert (1927) gave the name of the Javanese bird as *Treron pompadora griseicauda* Gray (ex Bonaparte) acknowledging, to a certain extent, that Bonaparte was the first author to publish the name.

He should have written it as *Treron pompadora griseicauda* Bonaparte (ex Gray MSS.). In our opinion the nomenclature should be as follows:

(1) *Treron pompadora griseicauda* Bonaparte, 1854 (nec of Gray, 1856).—Java. Syn. *Treron pulverulenta* Wallace, 1863.

(2) *Treron pompadora wallacai* (Salvadori), 1893.—Celebes.

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Remarks on the Serins from Southern Kurdistan in the National Collection

by Mr. Derek Goodwin

Received 27th June, 1955.

Ticehurst (1927) recorded Tristram's Serin, *Serinus syriacus*, as occurring commonly in winter at Dohuk and Mosul in southern Kurdistan. This statement was, apparently, based on information given to Sir Percy Cox and Major Cheeseman by La Personne, who collected in that area for them. Five Serins collected by La Personne at Dohuk in the winter of 1922 and labelled *Serinus syriacus* are in the national collection (B.M. Nos. 1924.3.20. 583–587). They are all *Serinus canarius serinus*, none showing any of the distinguishing features of *S. syriacus*.

If the collector made no mistake in the locality he attributed to these specimens they seem to indicate a slight eastward extension of the known range of *S. canarius serinus*. Witherby *et al.* (1938) gave the eastward extension of its range as Asia Minor and (in winter) Palestine. Tristram (1884) recorded it in winter in Palestine and said "Syria is its extreme eastern limit."

S. syriacus was recorded by Tristram (1884) as occurring in the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountains. Meinertzhagen (1935) and Aharoni (1942) found it in the Lebanon and at Mount Hermon in Palestine but failed to find it in the Anti-Lebanon. Aharoni also found it extremely abundant about Jaffa in winter. Meiklejohn (1954) stated that it occurs in Syria but did not give any details. Allouse (1950) did not list either *S. syriacus* or *S. canarius serinus* as occurring in Iraq. The only specimens in the national collection are three adults from Palestine (Hermon and Rukleh) and an adult and juvenile from the Lebanon. In view of the above facts any more recent or precise information on the status and identity of serins encountered east of Palestine and the Lebanon would seem well worth putting on record.

N.B.—There is some difference of opinion as to whether *S. syriacus* is a good species or should be considered as a race of *S. canarius*. The former opinion has been adopted here chiefly for convenience.

- 4 OCT 1955
PURCHASED

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On Colour Deviation in a Population of *Passer domesticus* (L) in Devonshire

by Mr. ALFRED HAZELWOOD and Mr. ERIC GORTON

Received 16th June, 1955.

A series of *Passer domesticus* (L) has been built up over the past five years from a small garden in Devonshire where they are constantly shot out by the owner to prevent the usurpation of house martins' nests. The collecting is thus random and draws upon a wider area than the actual garden since replacement is from outside.

All the birds represented differ markedly from series of *P. domesticus* collected in Lancashire and Scotland, which resemble the typical form, in several apparently separate characteristics.

The principal difference lies in a strong suffusion of wheaten-yellow over the underparts of both sexes. In the ♂♂, the feathers of the breast and flanks, are clearly, though faintly, striated. On the dorsal surface, the amount of chestnut on the hind-neck and mantle is much reduced, sometimes to extinction, so as to produce a colder and more definitely streaked appearance. These distinctions are maintained throughout the year but are naturally least pronounced in worn plumage. None of the ♂♂ show any trace of chestnut in the bib.

The extent of the distribution of this variant form is not known, nor is it possible as yet to determine its relationship to the typical form but it is so well marked, consistent and persistent to be worthy of record though its significance may be in doubt.

17 ♂♂, 6 ♀♀ examined, all in the Bolton Museum collection.

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DINNERS AND MEETINGS FOR 1955

18th October, 15th November, 13th December.

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ZOOLOGICAL NATURAL HISTORY

BULLETIN
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BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

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Published: 1st November, 1955

The five hundred and forty-second meeting was held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, on Tuesday, 18th October, 1955, following a dinner at 6.30 p.m.

Chairman: COLONEL MEINERTZHAGEN

Members present: 15; Guests, 6; Total 21.

The Chairman began by welcoming Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Richdale from New Zealand and Mr. H. G. Deignan from the U.S.A.

Mr. George Atkinson Willes gave a talk on the National Wildfowl Counts, an account of which will appear in the next Bulletin.

Mr. Richdale then gave an outline of some of his research into the life history of the Yellow-eyed Penguin of New Zealand, a species which nests on forest floors in gorse and giant nettles. In spite of this, community life is strong and Mr. Richdale described how he had studied this, both by ringing and by 'foot marking'—*i.e.* puncturing the webs, and gave an all too brief account of many of the interesting discoveries he had made concerning their behaviour and populations.

Remarks on the nomenclature of the Himalayan Races of *Regulus regulus*

by DR. CHARLES VAURIE

Received 18th May, 1955

In a recent number of this Bulletin (1954, vol. 74, pp. 103–104) Deignan has proposed a radical change in the nomenclature of the Himalayan races of *R. regulus* (the oldest name in the species is nominate *regulus* Linnaeus, 1758, for the European populations). The Himalayan races are currently divided into a western race (*himalayensis* Jerdon, 1863, type locality, Simla Hills) and an eastern race (*sikkimensis* R. and A. Meinertzhagen, 1926, type locality, Sikkim) but Deignan states that neither of these names can be used because he brings to light an older *R. himalayensis* described by Bonaparte in 1856 (Compt. Rendus Acad. Sci., vol. 42, p. 767) with type locality "les monts Himalayas". Bonaparte did not mention any specimen but, since he stated (preceding the description of the new form) "les monts Himalayas nourrissent aussi une nouvelle espèce

que Gould va nous figurer dans ses Birds of Asia, sous le nom de *Reg. himalayensis*,'' the specimen he described probably belonged to Gould and is presumably the same that was later illustrated and discussed by Gould in ''Birds of Asia'' (1869, fol. 21) and is listed in the ''Catalogue of Birds of the British Museum'' (1883, vol. 8, p. 82) as specimen ''b'' of the ''Himalayan Race'' from ''Nepal'' from the ''Gould Collection.'' Deignan concludes that ''since the specimen was from Nepal, *himalayensis* Bonaparte, 1856, must be applied to the eastern race . . . *sikkimensis* of the Meinertzhagens becomes its synonym, and the western Himalayan form is left without a valid name. It may be called *Regulus regulus salimalii*, new name.''

Is there any way in which this thoroughly confusing series of changes can be avoided ? The simple fact is that the name *himalayensis* of Bonaparte, contrary to what Deignan has stated, seems to apply to the western race now called *himalayensis* Jerdon and not to the eastern race *sikkimensis*. There is fairly conclusive evidence that the specimen described by Bonaparte did not come from Nepal but probably from the north-western Himalayas as stated by Gould himself.

This evidence seems to be provided by Gould's specimen. Mr. J. D. Macdonald of the British Museum has informed me that this specimen was entered in the register of the British Museum as being merely from the Himalayas and that it was not clear, therefore, why it had been listed in the ''Catalogue'' as from ''Nepal,'' unless the author, Gadow (the author of volume 8 of the Catalogue) believed it to have been collected by Hodgson. On this point Sir Norman Kinnear, who has an unrivalled knowledge of early Indian collections, kindly gave his opinion that it is not a Hodgson skin and therefore most unlikely to have been taken in Nepal. Mr. Macdonald adds that since the specimen ''is a reasonably good match with Gould's figure and description, it is highly probable that it is the type.''

This specimen, sent to me by Mr. Macdonald, was compared by Dr. Amadon and myself to birds from the western and eastern ends of the range in the Himalayas and we found that it matched very closely those from the north-western Himalayas but not those from eastern Nepal eastward.

Concerning the population of Nepal, four specimens (the only ones I could get together) from the country, show that one from eastern Nepal collected at Tonglo on the border of Sikkim, is identical with topotypical *sikkimensis* while the other three are intermediate in coloration between topotypical *sikkimensis* and topotypical *himalayensis* Jerdon. The three specimens consist of one which may have been collected in central Nepal at or near Katmandu as it is Hodgson's specimen listed as ''a'' in the Catalogue of Birds, one from Rimoche in north central Nepal, and the third from Tukche in western Nepal. Nineteen topotypes from the Simla Hills were used for comparison and nine specimens of *sikkimensis* (five from Sikkim, two from Chumbi Valley, and two from south-eastern Bhutan).

In short, there is no reason to adopt the proposals made by Deignan (which involve no less than four names) since the correct type locality of *himalayensis* Bonaparte is probably not Nepal and the intermediate popu-

lation of this region can be called by either of the names now in current use. We are left with a situation in which *sikkimensis* remains the name of the eastern race. The adherents to strict priority may choose to place into use for the western populations a name which has never been adopted (see below) and was based, as seems most probable, on a specimen collected in the north-western Himalayas and in this case a substitution is necessary only in the name of the author and date of *himalayensis* from Jerdon, 1863, to Bonaparte, 1856.

However, while acceptance of this would not involve the extensive confusion inherent in Deignan's proposals, even this minor change seems unnecessary as it is contrary to the Conservation Principle adopted by the Fourteenth International Congress of Zoology at Copenhagen in 1953 (articles 27-29 and appendix 2 of the Decisions) because *himalayensis* of Jerdon was proposed independently as a new species and *himalayensis* Bonaparte had been completely overlooked in the literature prior to Deignan's proposals. *R. himalayensis* of Bonaparte is not quoted in any standard work on the region such as Jerdon's "Birds of India" (1863, vol. 2), the "Fauna of British India" in its first edition by Oates (1889, vol. 1) or its second one by Stuart Baker (1924, vol. 2, and 1930, vols. 7 and 8), Hartert's "Vögel die paläarktischen Fauna" (1907, and supplements), or in David and Oustalet "Oiseaux de la Chine" (1877), or in any general world list such as the "Catalogue of Birds" (cited) and Sharpe's "Hand-list" (1903, vol. 4). Further, an earlier opinion of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (Opinion 107, see 1929, Smithsonian Misc. Coll. vol. 73 (6), p. 9; or, 1931, Report Eleventh Internatl. Congr. Zool., Padova, 1930, p. 87) had already stated that "a name in current use is not to be supplemented by an earlier but rarely adopted or an unadopted name unless the argument is unambiguous and unless the premises are *not subject to difference of opinion*", (italics mine).

We can thus reject *himalayensis* Bonaparte altogether and the nomenclature of the Himalayan races of *Regulus regulus* therefore remains as in the standard literature: *himalayensis* Jerdon, 1863, for the birds of the western Himalayas, and *sikkimensis* R. and A. Meinertzhagen, 1926, for the birds of the eastern Himalayas.

I am indebted and would like to express my gratitude to several of my colleagues for their cordial co-operation: to Mr. J. D. Macdonald and Sir Norman Kinnear for their comments and to Mr. Macdonald for the loan of Gould's specimen and other specimens from the British Museum, to Dr. A. L. Rand for the loan of specimens from the Chicago Museum of Natural History, and to Drs. E. Mayr and Amadon for their advice and reading the manuscript.

New Forms of Pipit, Longclaw, Robin-Chat, Grass-Warbler, Sunbird, Quail-Finch and Canary from Central Africa

by Mr. C. W. Benson

Received 20th September, 1955 and exhibited at the September meeting of the B.O.C.

In describing these new forms, I have had every facility while working in the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia, Bulawayo, from the

Director, Mr. R. H. N. Smithers, and Miss Mary Paterson; and subsequently in the British Museum, from Mr. J. D. Macdonald and his staff. I must also thank Captain C. H. B. Grant for much valuable advice.

a. Anthus caffer mzimbaensis, new race.

Description: Differs from *Anthus caffer caffer* Sundevall in being purer white on the abdomen, without any buffy tinge; wing and tail measurements larger.

Distribution: Only known from Edingeni, Mzimba district, Nyasaland.

Type: Adult ♂. Edingeni, Mzimba district, Nyasaland: 12° 03′ S., 33° 17′ E. 30th September, 1940. Collected by C. W. Benson. In the Transvaal Museum. T.M. Reg. No. 23910.

Measurements of Type: Wing 77, tail 57.5, culmen (from base) 14, tarsus 19 mm.

Remarks: Only known from the type specimen, and originally attributed (''Ibis'', 1942, p. 304) to *A. c. caffer*. The skull was fully ossified, and testes slightly enlarged.

This specimen has been compared with twenty-six from South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, in the British, Bulawayo and Transvaal Museums: wing 70–77, average 73.1; tail 47–55, average 50.9 mm. In the colouring of the abdomen, the Nayasaland specimen is at once distinguishable.

The foregoing is the only record of *Anthus caffer* from Nyasaland. In Northern Rhodesia it is only known from two females collected by me in the Mpika district at 11° 06′ S., 31° 08′ E., on 22nd January and 8th March. They are similar in colour and measurements to *A. c. caffer:* wing 71, 71.5; tail 50, 52 mm. These two and the Nyasaland specimen were collected in *Brachystegia* woodland. No peculiarity of habitat was noticed, and it is difficult to account for the extreme local rarity of the species. It may appear surprising that the Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland birds are distinct, but it should be remembered that they are separated by the Luangwa Rift.

I have been able to examine only two specimens of *A. c. blayneyi* van Someren, in the British Museum, both from northern Tanganyika Territory. One of these, from Loliondo, has the abdomen a pure white as in *A. c. mzimbaensis*. The other, from Ngopan hill, S.E. Masai district, is more buffy. They measure respectively, wing 66, 71; tail 44, 45 mm. Van Someren, Bull. B.O.C., 40, 1919, p. 56, gives wing 65–70 mm. for ten specimens of *A. c. blayneyi*, which must therefore be separable from *A. c. mzimbaensis* on measurements, if not on colour.

I have to thank Dr. G. Rudebeck for the loan of specimens in the Transvaal Museum.

b. Macronyx grimwoodi, new species.

Description: Differs from *M. a. ameliae* (Sundevall) and *M. a. wintoni* Sharpe by its longer culmen and tarsus; streaking on chest finer, and in a wider zone, extending further down towards the abdomen; red confined to the throat, and very pale; upperside tending to be generally darker, with margins of feathers more richly tawny.

Distribution: Only known from the Chitunta Plain, Mwinilunga district, Northern Rhodesia.

Type: ♂, skull fully ossified. Chitunta Plain, Mwinilunga district, Northern Rhodesia, 22nd July, 1954. Collected by Major I. R. Grimwood.

Collector's No. 893. In the National Museum, Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. N.M. Reg. No. 17565.

Measurements of Type: Wing 97, tail 69, culmen from base 21, tarsus 37 mm.

Remarks: Particulars of four other specimens collected by Major Grimwood, all with skull fully ossified, are as follows:

Sex	*Date*	*Wing*	*Tail*	*Culmen from base*	*Tarsus*
♂	27.7.51	92	66	22	38 mm.
♀	27.7.51	97	71	21	40 „
?	22.7.54	93	69	20	38 „
♂	27.7.51	94	70	22	38 „

I have measured all the specimens of *M. a. ameliae* and *M. a. wintoni* in the British and Bulawayo Museums, and due to the kindness of Professor H. Schouteden and Dr. J. M. Winterbottom several specimens from the Congo and South African Museums, respectively, have also been available. Assuming *M. a. ameliae* as confined to Natal and Zululand, the figures (in mm.) are as follows (in all cases culmen measurements are from base of skull):

M. a. ameliae.

3 ♂. Wing 94, 94, 95. Tail 73, 75, 82. Culmen 19. Tarsus 31, 32, 32.5.
1 ♀. Wing 88. Tail 72. Culmen 19. Tarsus 31.5.
4 unsexed. Wing 87, 93, 94, 96.5. Tail 72, 76, 77, 80. Culmen 18, 19 (three). Tarsus 31.5, 32, 33, 34.

M. a. wintoni.

38♂. Wing 86–95, av. 90.7. Tail 65–77, av. 70.1. Culmen 15.5–19, av. 17.0. Tarsus 28–33, av. 30.5.
19 ♀. Wing 82–91, av. 86.5. Tail 62–73, av. 67.7. Culmen 15–17.5, av. 16.5. Tarsus 29–33, av. 30.2.

Specimens from as close to the Mwinilunga district as Balovale, to the southward, and Kanzenze, to the northward (see gazetteer of localities, Chapin, Bds. Belg. Congo, 4, 1954) show no approach to *M. grimwoodi*, which seems best regarded as a distinct species, even although it is not known to occur alongside *M. ameliae*.

White, "Ibis", 1946, p. 78, has discussed the plumage stages in *M. ameliae*. To this I would add that the black on the chest seems only to coalesce into a black patch in adult males, but not in adult females, in which the chest is never more than streaked (and likewise apparently in both sexes of *M. grimwoodi*).

Whether *M. a. wintoni* is worth recognising is largely a matter of opinion. The measurements given above suggest that there is a tendency to relatively large size in Natal and Zululand, but with some overlap. It is perhaps best to recognise *M. a. wintoni*, but to restrict it to northern Tanganyika Territory and Kenya. Six specimens from this area in the British Museum are rather paler above than material as a whole from elsewhere, and see also Chapin, Bds. Belg. Congo, 3, 1953, p. 85. Incidentally, reference White, *op. cit.*, two of these northern males have a well developed coalescent black patch on the chest.

In the Northern Province of Northern Rhodesia, I have found *M. ameliae* of general distribution in moist short- grassed dambos. A young bird only just fledged was collected at Abercorn with its parents on 2nd July. A male in breeding condition was collected in southern Bangweulu on 8th February.

I am indebted to Mr. Smithers for drawing my attention to the specimens of *M. grimwoodi* and for placing them at my disposal for description. One of them has been presented to the British Museum.

c. Cossypha bocagei chapini, new race.

Description: Differs from *C. b. bocagei* Finsch & Hartlaub in the olive of the mantle, back and wing-coverts lacking any marked rufous tinge; rufous of underside rather paler.

Distribution: From Mwinilunga, north-western Northern Rhodesia, east through Ndola and the Upper Katanga, to Danger Hill, Kasama and Abercorn, in north-eastern Northern Rhodesia.

Type: Adult ♂. Mporokoso, Northern Rhodesia: 9° 22′ S., 30° 03′ E. 30th July 1953. Collected by C. W. Benson. Collector's No. NR 1703. In the British Museum. B.M. Reg. No. 1955. 41. 2.

Measurements of Type: Wing 81, tail 63, culmen (from base) 17, tarsus 26 mm.

Remarks: Named after Dr. James P. Chapin, who in his "Birds of the Belgian Congo", vol. 3, 1953, p. 520, draws attention to the difference in the colour of the underside between specimens from Angola and Mwinilunga. It is, however, in the colour of the upperside that there is the most marked difference.

Due to the kindness of Dr. Dean Amadon and Mr. E. T. Gilliard, I have had the loan of four specimens of *C. b. bocagei* in the American Museum of Natural History from Mombola and Mucuio, in western Angola, and also of one of *C. b. chapini* from Mwinilunga. I have also had available twenty-one specimens of *C. b. chapini* in the British and Bulawayo Museum. I do not consider that the difference on the upperside can be due to "foxing". Three of the Angola birds were collected in 1904, the fourth in 1925. One of the 1904 birds is rather less rufous than the other two and the 1925 bird. Of the series of *C. b. chapini*, fifteen were collected in 1953–5, one in 1944, five in 1905–8, and one about 1899. One of the 1905–8 birds, from Ndola, is very like the less rufous individual of the 1904 Angola three, but all the remaining twenty-one are quite distinctly purer olive.

Specimens of *C. b. chapini* personally sexed by me measure as follows:— six ♂, wing 79–84, tail 61–65 mm.; four ♀, wing 74–77, tail 55-59 mm. Four others, sexed as ♂, have wing 80–84, tail 59–66 mm.; likewise four ♀, wing 74–77, tail 54–58 mm. Three sexed as ♀, but probably ♂, have wing 83–84, tail 65–67 mm. An unsexed specimen, probably a ♀, has wing 75, tail 56 mm. Three ♂ of *C. b. bocagei* have wing 81–83, tail 65–69 mm. A specimen sexed as a ♀, but probably a ♂, has wing 83, tail 69 mm.

Cossypha bocagei cannot be conspecific with *C. polioptera*, as *C. b. chapini* presumably must overlap with *C. p. grimwoodi* White, described from the Mwinilunga district, and quite distinct. But its relationship to *C. insulana kungwensis* Moreau needs further investigation. Although there are marked differences, they may not be more than racial.

A ♂ collected near Kawambwa on 2nd September had testes much enlarged. A ♂ from near Abercorn on 24th November also showed some gonad activity. A specimen collected by Major W. E. Poles at Danger Hill on 7th January is still in a partially spotted juvenile dress. A. W. Vincent, "Ibis", 1947, p. 199, took eggs at Elisabethville on 23rd November. Like White, "Ibis", 1946, p. 91, I find that this robin-chat lives on or near the

floor of evergreen forest. I have not heard the song, which seems to be too high pitched for my ear. But a few minutes after hearing it on one occasion, my collector Jali Makawa described it as a series of four subdued syllables, the first and last of lower pitch than the second and third, and the last more prolonged than the first three. It reminded him somewhat of that of *Bessonornis macclouniei*, see Benson, Ann. Trans. Mus., 21(2), 1949, p. 170. It is apparently only normally heard in September—November.

P.S. For notes on a series collected by Verheyen, see his "Exploration du Parc National de L'Upemba", 1953, p. 497. I have seen this series, but it has not been practicable for me to compare them with the specimens recorded above. Some of them seem to show an inclination towards *C. b. bocagei*. Eighteen of the twenty-two specimens of *C. b. chapini* referred to above, however, are from east of the Luapula River. One collected on 18th March in the Upemba series is still in a complete juvenile spotted dress.

d. Cisticola fulvicapilla hallae, new race.

Description: In non-breeding dress, closest to *C. f. muelleri* Alexander, but with the crown paler; mantle paler and slightly greyer; underparts whiter, less tinged buff. Differs from *C. r. ruficapilla* (Smith) in having the mantle less rufous, therefore contrasting with the crown. No specimens of *C. f. dispar* Sousa in this dress are available for comparison, but from Lynes' description ("Ibis", 1930, suppl., p. 515), evidently altogether paler, less rich on the crown and mantle.

In breeding dress, slightly paler than *C. f. muelleri* above and below. Considerably paler on the crown and mantle than *C. f. dispar*. Slightly greyer on the mantle than *C. f. ruficapilla*, with the rufous of the crown more clearly divded from the mantle.

Distribution: North-eastern Bechuanaland north of 18° 40′ S. (Tsotsoroghe Pan and Panda Matenga): Barotseland south of 16°S. (Sesheke, Mashi, Shangombo and Nangweshi): Damaraland (Elephant Vlei): southern Angola (Luvando, approx. 14° 30′ S., 14° 30′ E.).

Type: ♀. in non-breeding dress. Tsotsoroghe Pan, north-eastern Bechuanaland. 26th June, 1930. Collected by the Vernay-Lang Kalahari Expedition. In the British Museum. B.M. Reg. No. 1932. 5.5.84.

Measurements of Type: Wing 45, tail 40, culmen from base 12 mm.

Remarks: This new race is named after Mrs. B. P. Hall, of the Bird Room staff in the British Museum. Four specimens in breeding dress, in the British Museum, from Luvando and Panda Matenga, examined; sixteen in non-breeding dress, in the British and Bulawayo Museums, from all localities except Luvando. Measurements: ♂, wing 46–52, tail 38–46 mm.; ♀, wing 44–49, tail 36–40 mm.

Specimens recently presented to the British Museum by Mr. C. M. N. White, which he asked me to examine, from Balovale, the Kabompo River and Mwinilunga, Northern Rhodesia, are close to *C. f. muelleri*. I have also examined specimens confirming the localities for that race given by White and Winterbottom in their Northern Rhodesia checklist, 1949, p. 102. Although I have not seen any intermediates, I believe that White and Winterbottom are correct in regarding *C. f. angusticauda* (Reichenow) as conspecific with *C. fulvicapilla*. My collector Jali Makawa tells me that the song-call of *C. f. angusticauda* is like that of *C. f. muelleri* in Nyasaland;

and see Chapin, Bds. Belg. Congo, 3, 1953, p. 379. We have collected specimens of *C. f. angusticauda*, now in the Bulawayo Museum, at Chembe (11° 58′ S., 28° 40′ E), Mporokoso, Kasama and in the Mpika district at 11° 22′ S., 30° 39′ E., and 12° 14′ S., 30° 51′ E. But specimens from that district at 11° 15′ S., 32° 05′ E., and 12° 05′ S, 31° 43′ E., are *C. f. muelleri*.

Mrs. B. P. Hall, in a paper on a collection made by her at Panda Matenga (awaiting publication), has indicated that certain of the material of *C. fulvicapilla* examined by her might represent a new race, but thought it inadvisable to give it a name without seeing further specimens. That this has been possible is due to Mr. Smithers, who has very kindly made available the material collected by him in southern Barotseland. I am much indebted to Mrs. Hall for a great deal of assistance in the preparation of this note. It is only in deference to her wishes that this new race is formally described by me, rather than by her.

e. Cinnyris oustaleti rhodesiae, new race.

Description: Differs from *Cinnyris oustaleti oustaleti* (Bocage), of western Angola, by its ~~longer~~ bill; wing and tail measurements also rather smaller.

Distribution: Kasama, Mporokoso, Abercorn and Mwenzo, north-eastern Northern Rhodesia.

Type: Adult ♂. Kasama, Northern Rhodesia. 23rd March, 1954. Collected by C. W. Benson. Collector's No. N.R. 2998. In the British Museum. Brit. Mus. Reg. No. 1955. 38.3.

Measurements of Type: Wing 56, tail 36, culmen (exposed) 17, tarsus 16 mm.

Remarks: Measurements of the material in the British Museum (all adult ♂) are as follows:—

C. o. oustaleti.

Caconda and Huambo in Angola: four specimens. Culmen (exposed) 19, 19, 20, 20 mm.; wing 55–57, average 56.1 mm.; tail 36. 5–39, average 37.9 mm.

C. o. rhodesiae.

Northern Rhodesia: four specimens, including the type. Culmen (exposed) 17, 17, 17, 17.5 mm.; wing 52.5–56 mm.; tail 33.5–36 mm. In addition, seven adult ♂ in the Coryndon Museum, Nairobi:— culmen (exposed) 16.5 (two), 17 (three), 17.5, 18 mm.; wing 52–56.5 mm.; tail 34–36 mm. Summary of eleven specimens in all:— culmen (exposed) 16.5–18, average 17.1 mm.; wing 52–56.5, average 54.6 mm.; tail 33.5–36, average 35.0 mm.

I am indebted to Mr. J. G. Williams for very kindly sending me the measurements of the adult ♂ in the Coryndon Museum. His paper in "Ibis", 1955, pp. 150–153, contains much further information about *C. oustaleti* in Northern Rhodesia.

f. Ortygospiza atricollis smithersi, new race.

Description: Similar to *O. a. polyzona* (Temminck), *O. a. minuscula* White and *O. a. muelleri* Zedlitz, but at once distinguishable by the much darker upperside. Also, less constant, chestnut on underside tending to be richer, and barring on chest to be finer.

Distribution: South and east of Lake Bangweulu; Mweru Marsh at

8° 32′ S., 30° 07′ E.; Lake Kako, 8° 40′ S., 30° 15′ E.; Abercorn (all localities in north-eastern Northern Rhodesia). Flood plains.

Type: ♂. Mpasa, Bangweulu, 11° 00′ S., 30° 30′ E., Northern Rhodesia, 19th August 1953. Collected by C. W. Benson. Collector's No. NR 1806. In the British Museum. B.M. Reg. No. 1955.41.1.

Measurements of Type: Wing 52, tail 29, culmen from base 9 mm.

Remarks: Named after Mr. R. H. N. Smithers. Fourteen ♂ of *O. a. smithersi* have wing 50–55, average 52.8 mm.; fourteen ♀ 52–56, average 53.9 mm. Thirteen ♂ of *O. a. polyzona* in the British Museum, from the Transvaal southwards, have wing 52–56, average 54.7 mm.; likewise fourteen ♀ wing 53.5–57, average 54.9 mm. In all, I have examined fifty-two specimens of *O. a. polyzona*, two of *O. a. minuscula* and seventeen of *O. a. muelleri*. The nearest locality to *O. a. smithersi* from which *O. a. polyzona* is represented is Namwala, southern Northern Rhodesia, and *O. a. muelleri* from Karonga, northern Nyasaland. *O. a. minuscula* is only certainly known from the Balovale district, on the upper Zambesi. Mr. C. M. N. White has suggested that specimens may fade in the course of time. If so, *O. a. smithersi* might merely be based on fresh specimens, all of which have been collected since July 1953. The material of the other three races was all collected earlier, much of it considerably so. But I feel that the difference is too marked to be explicable on this basis, and is in fact attributable to proximity to the still darker *O. a. fuscata* Sclater. Furthermore, fresh specimens of that form collected by me are not appreciably darker above than specimens collected over twenty years ago.

Indeed, the relationship of *O. a. smithersi* to *O. a. fuscata* is a much more interesting problem than its relationship to the other three races. I have examined material of *O. a. fuscata* from the Kwango district, Luluabourg and Kayoyo in the southern Belgian Congo, and from Kawambwa, Fort Rosebery, Mporokoro, Kasama and Abercorn in north-eastern Northern Rhodesia, as follows:— nineteen ♂, wing 52–55, average 52.8 mm., nine ♀, wing 50–55, average 52.9 mm. Thus in wing length there is no appreciable difference from *O. a. smithersi*. But colour differences are readily apparent. *O. a. fuscata* lacks any white on the chin and around the eye, is on the whole richer in colour, and the barring on the chest tends to be finer. Also, in adult ♂ the bill is wholly red whereas in *O. a. smithersi* the upper mandible is mainly sepia. If the localities already cited for the two forms are plotted on a map it is evident that there is some geographical overlap, and one might be inclined to regard them as distinct species. Moreover, both were collected at Abercorn. In this locality three specimens of *O. a. fuscata* were from a permanently moist 'sponge' dambo, and two of *O. a. smithersi* from a flood-plain drying up after the end of the rains. At Kasama, where there are only 'sponge' dambos, four specimens of *O. a. fuscata* were collected, and one of *O. a. smithersi*. Apart from this, all the specimens of *O. a. fuscata* are from dambos and all of *O. a. smithersi* from flood-plains.

Until more is known about the relationship, in north-eastern Northern Rhodesia and elsewhere, of the forms with white on the chin and around the eye to those lacking these characters, I think it is better to regard them as conspecific. But it follows that in the area in which I have been collecting the two races must be regarded as ecological to some extent rather than geographical. Chapin, Bds. Belg. Congo, 4, 1954, p. 500, evidently found a

rather similar state of affairs in the Bogoro / Kasenyi area. The two forms were identical in behaviour. Neither does my own experience suggest any difference. Chapin's account, *op. cit.*, of the species as a whole, is essential to any further study of this problem. One factor which may militate against recognising a second species is that *O. a. ugandae* van Someren is said to be of intermediate pattern with very little white on the chin and around the eye.

Finally, I suggest that the explanation of a dark-backed race (*O. a. smithersi*) interposed between paler-backed races (*O. a. polyzona* and *O. a. muelleri*) may be the presence of *O. a. fuscata* in the same geographic area, from which *O. a. smithersi* is probably not completely segregated.

I have to thank Dr. A. J. Cain for the loan of the two specimens of *O. a. minuscula*, in the Oxford University Museum.

P.S. I have had the loan of a further two specimens of *O. a. minuscula*, from the American Museum of National History, making in all two ♂ and two ♀ available. Comparing them with the series of *O. a. polyzona* in the British Museum, I find it difficult to appreciate the colour differences given, see "Ibis", 1946: 218. *O. a. minuscula* seems very close to *O. a. polyzona*. Possibly with a longer series *O. a. minuscula* might appear whiter on the abdomen. But one specimen has very little white, and a number of the specimens of *O. a. polyzona* have it quite well marked. There is also considerable variation in this respect in the series of *O. a. smithersi*, but in *O. a. fuscata* the white is practically absent.

It is also worth mentioning that an occupied nest with five eggs of *O. a. smithersi* was seen in southern Bangweulu on 9th February.

g. Serinus atrogularis kasamaensis, new race.

Description: Differs from *Serinus atrogularis lwenarum* White in having much less tawny on the chest and flanks; slightly darker on upperside.

Distribution: Only so far known from Kasama, north-eastern Northern Rhodesia.

Type: Adult ♂. Kasama. 2nd September 1953. Collected by C. W. Benson. Collector's No. NR 1919. In the British Museum. Brit. Mus. Reg. No. 1955. 42. 1.

Measurements of Type: Wing 74, tail 45, culmen from base 9 mm.

Remarks: Six further specimens collected: three ♂, wing 73–77 mm.; two ♀, wing 72–73 mm.; one unsexed, wing 71 mm. This series has been compared in the British Museum with three specimens of *S. a. lwenarum* from the Balovale district, and two from the Katanga (Biano Plateau and Upper Lualaba). Single specimens from near Mporokoso, north-eastern Bangweulu and the Lukanga Swamp also resemble *S. a. lwenarum;* likewise three from Mongu and Mankoya. Another from Mongu is paler, more greyish above and less tawny below, resembling specimens from further south in Barotseland. Three from the Sesheke district, and one from near the Khazuma Pan in north-eastern Bechuanaland at 18° 25′ S., 25° 30′ E., show these characters very markedly. Three from the Senanga district are rather similar, though with some tendency towards *S. a. lwenarum*, being rather darker above and more tawny below. These seven specimens have been compared with three topotypes of *S. a. fitzsimonsi* Roberts, Ann. Trans. Mus., 16(1), 1935, p. 183, which are darker, more brownish on the

upperside. Unfortunately no material has been available of *S. a. semideserti* Roberts *op. cit.*, but it is possible that they are that race.

A Note on *Pirenestes* Swainson, and Description of a New Species

by Mr. C. W. Benson

Received 20th September, 1955 and exhibited at the September meeting of the B.O.C.

Mr. D. Vesey-FitzGerald and I have recently collected in Northern Rhodesia the following specimens of *Pirenestes*:—

a. Adults, skull fully ossified, with red on head.

Sex	*Date*	*Locality*	*Wing (mm.)*	*Width of lower mandible at base (mm.)*
♂	31.5.54	Kasama	74.5	18.5
♀	28.1.55	,,	71	17
♀	28.1.55	,,	71	17

b. Immature, skull ossification only 40–50% complete, no red on head.

Sex	*Date*	*Locality*	*Wing (mm.)*	*Width of lower mandible at base (mm.)*
♀	1.6.54	Kasama	71	17
♀	4.6.54	,,	69	17
♀	11.6.54	*Mpika district* at 12° 05′ S., 31° 40′ E.	70	17

The Kasama birds were collected near the floor of a patch of dense evergreen forest, about 100 yards wide, bordering a small perennial stream. The Mpika bird was from a thin fringe of evergreen scrub, along a non-perennial stream. But the predominant vegetation in both these areas is *Brachystegia* woodland. The first collected adult had seeds similar to those of finger millet in its stomach; the other two, seeds similar to those of kaffir corn, also a few insect legs and fragments of shells (identifications by Provincial Agricultural Officer, Kasama.)

According to measurements already published, the adults agree best with *P. ostrimus maximus* Chapin, and are similar in colour. There can be no doubt that the immature birds belong to the same form. They are similar in colour to the adult ♀, but without any red on the head, and the red in the tail and upper tail-coverts is dull orange-red rather than crimson.

Due to the kindness of Professor E. Stresemann, I have had the loan from the Berlin Museum of the type specimen of *P. frommi* Kothe, collected only some 100 miles north of Kasama. It is sexed as a ♂; wing 70, width of lower mandible at base 16 mm. It appears to be still younger than any of the Northern Rhodesian birds. The bill, instead of being blackish slate, is sepia, with pale ochraceous at the base of the lower mandible. In plumage the only difference is that it is more chocolate, less greyish on the abdomen. Being a younger bird it is in fresher plumage, and the difference seems due merely to wear.

There can be no doubt that the type of *P. frommi* and the Northern Rhodesian material belong to the same form. They should be known as

P. ostrinus frommi, which is an older name than *P. o. maximum:* a possibility predicted by Chapin (1924, p. 430, footnote 1).

It follows that the large billed form found alongside *P. minor* Shelley can no longer be known as *P. frommi*. See Chapin (1924, pp.429–430), an adult ♂ from the Uluguru Mts., Tanganyika Territory has only a restricted amount of red on the head, as in *P. minor*; wing 62 mm. only. It evidently only differs from *P. minor* in its heavier bill. Chapin gives the width of the lower mandible at base as 15 mm. There are two ♀ in the British Museum from Portuguese East Africa which only differ from ♀ of *P. minor* in the same manner. It is these three specimens which were placed by Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1947) with *P. frommi*, but cannot be so any longer. Benson, "Ibis", 1948, p. 325, records another such bird from Nyasaland: an immature ♀, wing 62, width of lower mandible at base 14 mm. I propose the following name for these four birds:—

Pirenestes vincenti, new species.

Description: Differs from *P. minor* Shelley by its heavier bill.

Distribution: Uluguru Mts., Tanganyika Territory; Furancungo and Mocuba district, Portuguese East Africa; Kabunduli, near Chinteche, Nyasaland.

Type: Adult ♀. Elephant Bend, 64 miles west-north-west of Mocuba, Portuguese East Africa: 16° 37′ S., 36° 13′ E. 17th January 1932. Collected by Jack Vincent. Collector's No. 200. In the British Museum. Brit. Mus. Reg. No. 1933–3–1–2011.

Measurements of Type: Wing 61, tail 51, width of lower mandible at base 14, tarsus 19.5 mm.

Remarks: The other ♀ in the British Museum, from Furancungo, has wing 62, width of lower mandible at base 13.5 mm. Ten specimens of *P. minor* have wing 58–62, width of lower mandible at base 9–12 mm.

I have some misgivings about differentiating these large billed birds as a distinct species, and have already suggested that they might be a mere variety of *P. minor*, see my Nyasaland checklist, 1953, p. 78. Moreover, Vincent, "Ibis", 1936, p. 98, obtained a ♀ of *P. vincenti* which he thought was the mate of a ♂ of *P. minor*. However, until at least we know more about the relationship of the large and small billed birds, it seems wise to regard them as distinct species. There appears to be no difference in habitat. Both live in dense undergrowth in areas with an unusually high rainfall average.

I am indebted to Captain C. H. B. Grant for his advice in the preparation of this note.

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Fish and other Aquatic Fauna as Predators of Birds

by Dr. James M. Harrison

Received 3rd May, 1955

In the Ibis for 1943 is a letter by Mr. Willoughby P. Lowe[1] entitled "Do Fishes prey upon Sea-Birds?". In this he quotes the cases of a Sandwich Tern, *Sterna sandvicensis sandvicensis* Latham and a Grey-headed Gull,

[1] *Ibis*, 1943, p. 104.

Larus cirrocephalus Vieillot, recording that both had the skin of the thighs badly torn, a type of injury which is considered as probably due to the action of some voracious fish. These observations were made off the coast of West Africa.

Following this communication, the late Mr. W. E. Glegg[2] called to mind an observation he recorded of a White-winged Black Tern, *Chlidonias leucoptera* (Temminck), one of a party of five hawking over a lagoon at the Campo del Oro, Corsica, on 19th May, 1930. One of these plunged downwards towards the surface of the water and did not reappear. Mr. Glegg concluded that it had been taken by some kind of fish.

Mr. Lowe, in the letter referred to above, while recognising that the light underparts of most aquatic species act in all probability in a protective manner, expresses the opinion that the survival value of this adaptation could be largely minimised by the movements of the legs and feet in swimming.

Of fresh-water fish, the Pike, *Esox lucius* must be regarded as probably the greatest menace to water-birds and Mr. Glegg,[3] on the authority of Mr. F. J. F. Barrington, states that the spectacle of a Pike seizing young ducks and Moorhens on a pond at Pentney, Norfolk, was so frequent that he usually did not keep written notes of the occurrences. Mr. Glegg, (*loc. cit.*) adds a wealth of evidence of the serious depredations of this species on water-fowl. Similar testimony is brought forward by Sloman (*fide* W. E. Glegg, 1945) with regard to *Esox lucius*. The bird species taken include duckling, young Coots, *Fulica americana* Gmelin, and grebes. The duck species listed by Sloman include Canvas-back, *Nyroca valesineria* (Wilson), Red-head, *Nyroca americana* (Eyton), the species most commonly found as prey; Lesser Scaup, *Nyroca affinis* (Eyton) and Ruddy Duck, *Oxyura jamaicensis* (Gmelin). Diving duck were more often taken than surface-feeding species, but amongst the latter Gadwall, *Anas strepera* (Linnaeus), Mallard, *Anas platyrhynchos* Linnaeus and Teal were noted. Of passerine species a young Yellow-headed Blackbird, *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus* (Bonaparte) was taken from the stomach of one of these fish. Sloman estimated that in the area he had studied the annual destruction of young water-fowl possibly amounted to 1,500,000 birds.

Glegg (*loc, cit.*) records that a Wire-tailed Swallow, *Hirundo smithii* Leach, shot by Hayes, which fell into the river Niger, was immediately seized by some fish. The Cod, *Gadus callaria*, is recorded as having taken the Black Guillemot, *Uria grylle grylle* (Linnaeus).

For full details the reader is referred to Mr. Glegg's original papers, but he concludes by writing "the danger to birds from enemies which inhabit water is not inconsiderable".

Another important contribution to the subject is made by R. Légendre.[4] This author gives the following record which came under his personal observation, when from the stomach of a Blue Shark, *Charcarias glaucus*, he recovered the body of a Guillemot, *Uria aalge* Pontoppidan. He mentions as one of the most voracious predators, the Angler-Fish, *Lophius piscatorius*, and quotes the following supporting evidence: Blake-Knox,

[2] *Ibid*, 1945, pp. 422–433.
[3] *Ibid*, 1947, pp. 433–437.
[4] *Oiseau*, Paris, 1941, pp. 37–41.

1865, received one which had caught a Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax carbo* (Linnaeus)—this bird was impacted in the fish's jaws as far as the shoulders. Couch, in 1869, received another with a Herring Gull, *Larus argentatus* Pontoppidan similarly impacted. An instance of the Great Northern Diver, *Colymbus immer* Brünnich having fallen a victim to the Angler-Fish is on record. In 1880 Day records as the prey of this species, Wigeon, *Anas penelope* Linnaeus; Guillemot, *Uria aalge* Pontoppidan and Razorbill, *Alca torda* Linnaeus. In 1884, Goode mentions a diver and another with seven ducks in its stomach, although the species and age was not given. Bigelow records the following species: Lesser Black-backed Gull, *Larus fuscus* Linnaeus; Velvet Scoter, *Melanitta fusca* (Linnaeus); various grebes and divers; Wigeon, and Goosander, *Mergus merganser* Linnaeus. In 1929, Gudger states that he was told by some fishermen that they had found one which had taken a gull, and in 1939 a Manx Shearwater, *Procellaria puffinus* Brünnich was recovered from the stomach of one of these fishes.

Fisher[5] writes:— "Occasionally (and certainly not very importantly) fish have been known to prey upon sea-birds".

With these pertinent observations in mind, I can now add some further supporting evidence of fishes preying upon aquatic birds, and can also extend the presumtive evidence to certain molluscs, and on personal direct evidence to the crustacea. In the case of the mollusca however, it must be stressed that predation or injuries resulting must be regarded as purely fortuitous.

Concerning predation by fish; in the great "wreck" of Leach's Petrels, *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* (Vieillot), Dr. Norman W. Moore was good enough to send me twenty-five specimens recovered from the tide-line and neighbourhood of the Brean Sands, Somerset. On examining these, I was astonished to find that no fewer than six of these birds had suffered the loss of some part of the lower extremities. The injuries found can be classified as follows:—

a. Loss of one toe tip—one
b. Loss of all toe tips on one foot—one
c. Amputation of the "foot" at the tarso-metatarsal joint—three
d. Amputation immediately distal to the tibio-tarsal joint—one

These of course represent the survivors and were probably attacked by relatively small fish, but what of the birds which were taken by larger fish—how many? Possibly this species when settling among a shoal of Mackerel would lose a not inconsiderable number to the fully-grown fish. It is my opinion that nothing other than a fish could inflict injuries such as these found on a purely marine species, which seeks its food on the surface of the sea.

The second instance of what appeared to be an injury inflicted by a fish was provided by the case of a Little Gull, *Larus minutus* Pallas. This bird, an immature ♂, was sent me in the flesh by Mr. R. E. Wood. It was found alive at Sandwich a few days prior to 12th December, 1954. It was seen to have a large and very lacerated wound on the abdomen and from which it ultimately succumbed. When I examined the bird I was impressed by the unusual charaters of the wound. The edges were jagged and irregular,

[5] *Sea Birds*, 1954, p. 114.

the underlying abdominal viscera were torn and it is evident that survival would have been impossible. The feathers were soiled by leakage of intestinal contents, although the bird was not unduly wasted, the injury having been recently inflicted. I had little doubt that the attacker was a fish of some kind, most probably an eel.

Coming now to the crustacea, I have myself seen a Dunlin, *Calidris alpina* (Linnaeus), which had been shot and had fallen into a creek, immediately seized and dragged under the surface of the water by a smallish Shore Crab. One wonders, not unreasonably, whether other shore-birds, particularly those species frequenting rocky pools may not at times be taken by larger crustacea.

A further type of injury must now be considered. Anyone with wild-fowling experience will have shot both duck and waders which have suffered the loss of toes or even of the whole tarsus. I have seen the condition in the Wigeon, in a Curlew, *Numenius arquata arquata* (Linnaeus) and in two Grey Plovers, *Charadrius squatarola* (Linnaeus). It is my opinion that such amputations result from the victim inadvertently settling in the vicinity of one of the giant clams, which are so common in some waters. The result of this calamity is that the clam remains closely shut on the limb, until from necrosis the parts separate and healing of the stump can advance.

Undoubtedly any injury can cause interruption of the normal process of moulting, and the Grey Plovers mentioned above which were killed respectively in October and in late December were still largely in the summer dress, though naturally grossly faded and showing excessive wear.

A "Needle-tailed" Guillemot

by Dr. Jeffery G. Harrison

Received 13th July, 1955

Through the kindness of Mr. Alfred Hazelwood of the Bolton Museum, I have been able to examine an unusual variety of the Guillemot, *Uria aalge* (Pontoppidan), which was found oiled at Hornsea, east Yorkshire, on 20th March, 1955. The bird is a male, still in winter dress and is preserved in the Bolton Museum.

The tail feathers of this specimen, which number the usual twelve, consist solely of the shafts, being without barbs except for approximately the basal two centimetres of each feather. The shafts are a little lighter brown than is usual, but are not unduly worn, considering that the abrasion they have been exposed to must have been greater than it would have been, were they protected by barbs. The general contour of the tail is maintained by the tips of the shafts, which are only a few millimetres shorter than normal.

Further unusual wear is to be seen on the tips of the innermost secondaries. The white portions of the barbs are in the process of being shed, the wear being most marked on the outer side of each shaft, but the barbs on the inner side have lost their barbules and appear thin. The wear finishes and is sharply demarcated at the junction with the black portion of the feather. In almost all the secondaries the shaft is protruding, so that the appearance begins to resemble the state of affairs in the tail.

Comparison with other Guillemots shows that the mantle and rump

feathers and the wing coverts are showing rather more wear than is usual at that time of the year. This is more marked as the bird is one of the darker forms, probably *Uria aalge intermedia* Nilsson, and the periphery of these feathers appear paler and there has been a failure of the barbules with the result that the barbs have become widely separated.

It is difficult to be certain of the explanation of this unusual bird. I think one can exclude trauma due to excessive preening, resulting from oil contamination, because of the symmetrical distribution of the wear on the wings and the fact that if the tail had been preened "bare", then the shafts would be more worn.* It is a very remote possibility that the original barbule failure might be the result of energetic treatment with a detergent to remove a previous oil contamination. It would be of interest in following up such cases if they could all be ringed before releases are made.

In my opinion, the underlying cause is more likely to have been an inherent weakness of the barbules, so that water friction when swimming beneath the surface caused an exceptional amount of wear. The wings when used as "oars" under water meet with considerable resistance and the innermost secondaries being less mobile than the outer ones or the primaries suffer more severely. Similarly the tail, acting as a rudder also meets the full force of underwater currents. In its present condition the plumage must have been a handicap to the bird.

It is interesting to note how the white tips of the secondaries have suffered, whereas the abrasion has not extended further down the feather into the black portion, so that a square tipped feather has resulted. This is similar to the process termed subtractive change, which Commander C. P. Staples and I have described as a physiological process, associated with plumage colour change without moult, in certain species.[1] This is an example of subtractive change occurring as a pathological process, and lends support to our contention that there is some change in structure at the point of change from black to white pigment in the barbule, for in this case the black portion is obviously more resistant. Mr. Hazelwood has also remarked that the specimen may point to the kind of mutation which can arise spontaneously to permit the emergence of spine-tailed forms, of which the Needle-tailed Swift, *Chaetura caudacuta* (Latham) is a good example. Further evidence that such plumage variations may have a genetical basis is shown in the case of the "hairy" albescent Jay, *Garrulus glandarius glandarius* Linnaeus which Dr. James M. Harrison has described.[2] This bird had unusually loose plumage and remarkably attenuated primaries, especially the first, which resembles the characteristic first primary of the Magpie, *Pica pica* Linnaeus, and was thought to have phylogenetic significance.

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* Mr. Hazelwood reports the oil contamination was on the breast, one flank and around the vent.

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1. Lt. Cdr. C. P. Staples and Dr. Jeffery G. Harrison. "Further as to Colour Change without Moult–Subtractive Change–its Incidence and Implication." Bull. B.O.C. Vol. 69, pp. 80–103. 1949.

2. Dr. James M. Harrison. "Some Phylogenetic Trends in *Garrulus glandarius* (Linnaeus) and Dendrocopus major (Linnaeus)." Proc. Xth. Int. Ornith. Congress. Uppsala, 1951.

BACK NUMBERS OF THE "BULLETIN"

Back numbers of the "Bulletin" can be obtained at 2/6 each. Applications should be made to R. A. H. Coombes, Esq., Zoological Museum, Tring, Herts. No reply will be sent if parts are not available.

Members who have back numbers of the "Bulletin" which they no longer require, are requested to kindly send them to R. A. H. Coombes, Esq., as above.

DINNERS AND MEETINGS FOR 1955

15th November, 13th December.

SEPARATES

Contributors who desire free copies of the Bulletin containing their notes should state so on their MS., otherwise these will not be ordered. These will be supplied up to a maximum of fifty.

PUBLICATION OF THE "BULLETIN"

Members who make a contribution at a Meeting should hand the MS. to the Editor at that Meeting. As the proofs will be corrected by the Editor, it is essential that the MS. should be correct and either typed or written very clearly with scientific and place names in block letters. The first mention of a scientific name should be spelt out in full, i.e., genus, specific name, racial name (if any), and author. Any further mention of the same name need only have the initial letter of the genus and no further mention of the author.

If no MS. is handed to the Editor at the Meeting, a note will be inserted mentioning the contribution.

BLACK AND WHITE ILLUSTRATIONS

The Committee have decided that in future the Club will pay for a reasonable number of black and white blocks at the discretion of the Editor. If the contributor wishes to have the blocks to keep for his own use afterwards, the Club will not charge for them, as has been done in the past.

Communications are not restricted to members of the British Ornithologists' Club, and contributions up to 1,500 words on taxonomy and related subjects will be considered from all who care to send them to The Editor, Dr. J. G. Harrison, "Merriewood", St. Botolph's Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Communications relating to other matters should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, N. J. P. Wadley, Esq., 14 Elm Place, London, S.W.7.

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OF THE

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Edited by
DR. JEFFERY HARRISON

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BRITISH MUSEUM NATURAL HISTORY ZOOLOGY

BULLETIN

OF THE

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

Volume 75

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The five hundred and forty-third meeting was held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, on Tuesday, 15th November, 1955, following a dinner at 6.30 p.m.

Chairman: COLONEL MEINERTZHAGEN

Members present: 27; Guests, 10; Total 37

The Chairman welcomed Professor Horstadius from Uppsala, who spoke of the Observatory and Ringing Station which the Swedish Ornithological Association is starting with Italian permission, on the Island of Capri, in a restored ruin above San Michele. A grant towards this international venture has been made by the King of Sweden. Professor Horstadius hoped that some British ornithologists would help work the Observatory.

Mrs. Iris Darnton then showed her outstanding colour film *From Hippos to Sun Birds*, which she had recently made in the Queen Elizabeth and Murchison Falls National Parks and around Entebbe, in Uganda. There were magnificent shots of a wide variety of birds and mammals, those of the various water fowl being particularly remarkable. The sight of a massed flock of Pelicans driving fish into the shallows and then all fishing in unison, submerging their heads simultaneously, had never been witnessed by anyone present. Other pictures showed Black-winged Stilts feeding with their heads under water, and the Cuckoo Shrike at its nest, which was bound to the tree by webs and lichens so that it was almost indistinguishable from the branch. The pictures of the Crimson-breasted Shrike took four days to obtain and amply repaid such patience.

The shots of the Hammerkop entering its nest hole by closing its wings tightly to its sides gave rise to an interesting discussion as to how the Goldeneye can enter nest boxes in Sweden, or as Captain Collingwood Ingram mentioned, the disused nest of a Great Black Woodpecker in a vertical, bare fir trunk. Professor Horstadius said that when doing this, the Goldeneye's legs were stretched out behind and he did not know how it managed to stop once inside. It could not get in if the entrance had to be approached too fast down wind and to avoid this trouble it was necessary to have two entrances to the nesting boxes. Mr. Mackworth-Praed mentioned that the Pigmy Goose also performed the same feat.

The Races of the Swiftlet, *Collocalia brevirostris* (McClelland)

by Mr. H. G. Deignan

Received 4th June, 1955

In the course of a critical review of the swiftlets of Thailand, based upon a considerable number of recently collected and previously unstudied specimens, I have found it necessary to investigate the status of the mysterious *Collocalia innominata* Hume, 1873, established upon a unique type from the Andaman Islands (where it has never been found again). The name has been attached by various workers to a number of specimens from both inland mountains and offshore islets between Tongking, northern Thailand and Selangor, inclusive, but no characters have been adduced by which the form could certainly be distinguished from its relatives. In this dilemma, I have called upon Mrs. B. P. Hall, of the British Museum (N.H.), requesting the loan of a skin compared with and most nearly like Hume's type.

Mrs. Hall wrote me that, from a box containing "a dozen or more" specimens of "*innominata*," after removing those that evidently belonged with *Collocalia maxima maxima* Hume (*cf.* Deignan, *antea* 75: 82) or with *C. brevirostris* subspp., she was left with one skin, *the* type, which itself could not be separated from *brevirostris* ! Mr. J. D. Macdonald, checking her conclusions, arrived at the same results. The specimen designated by them as the nearest match in colour with the type of *innominata* is a worn bird from Myitkyina, north-eastern Burma, Brit. Mus. Reg. No. 1941.21.1.–704, which respresents *Collocalia brevirostris brevirostris* (McClelland), but the wing length of the type (136 mm.) places it only with the Chinese race, *C. br.* "*inopina*" Thayer and Bangs.

This startling intelligence led me to re-examine the one skin of putative "*innominata*" in Washington, together with the one skin of putative "*maxima*". The former has proved to be an excellent example of the true *maxima*, while the latter, which after all the standard revisions should be the true *innominata*, like the bird in London cannot be separated by any character from the Chinese *C. br.* "*inopina*" Thayer and Banges.

Through the courtesy of Mr. Macdonald and Mrs. Hall, I now have before me 30 London Skins of *Collocalia brevirostris* subspp. from the pertinent areas of south-eastern Asia, to add to three kindly sent me from the Princeton Museum of Zoology, nine from the Chicago Natural History Museum, and 31 in the collection of the United States National Museum. Examination of this rich material has led me to conclusions quite at variance from those of earlier revisers.

The several breeding populations represented in my series may be grouped in three nameable races. That the three belong to a single species is indicated by their possession of a common colour pattern and degree of caudal furcation, by their continuous range, and by their showing an even cline from North to South in length of wing and degree of tarsal feathering, with intermediates appearing at just the expected areas. While no information on their nests and eggs is yet available, all seem to breed in mountainous regions of the interior ; some individuals of the more northern populations move southward in winter as far as the Malay Peninsula, and there occur indifferently in the mountains and along the coasts.

It seems probable that *Collocalia brevirostris* may not properly be united specifically with any of its Malaysian congeners, and I must even doubt whether Peters is justified in linking it with *C. unicolor* of Ceylon, which has a dark rump, is geographically isolated from other populations, or (if we may trust Stuart Baker) is sympatric with *brevirostris* in the western Himalayas.

Juveniles of any race may be recognized by their lesser size, less well-developed rump band, the greater amount of concealed white in the contour feathers above and below, and by having the tarsi more sparsely feathered than their adults. Individual variation in older birds appears in a general fading and browning of the upper parts (probably resulting from exposure to sunlight) in the most worn specimens, often accompanied by a greater distinctness of the rump band. The under parts of individuals may be greyer or browner in any population, and the increase of brownish suffusion seems to be connected with plumage wear. The degree of tarsal covering cannot readily be ascertained in every specimen whether because of the difficulty of examination without causing injury to the skin, or because insects or handling during preparation may have more or less completely stripped the tarsal skin of feathers.

I accept the following forms:

1. *Collocalia brevirostris innominata* Hume.

Collocalia innominata Hume, Stray Feathers, 1 (2, 3 & 4): 294, Feb. 1873 (Andaman Islands).

Collocalia fusciphaga (*sic*) *capnitis* Thayer and Bangs, Bull. Mus. Comp. Zoöl., 52 (8): 139, May, 1909 (Hupeh Province, China).

Collocalia inopina Thayer and Bangs, Bull. Mus. Comp. Zoöl., 52 (8): 139, May 1909 (Hupeh Province, China).

Collocalia inopina pellos (*sic*) Thayer and Bangs Mem. Mus. Comp. Zoöl., 40 (4): 158, Aug. 1912 (Wa-shan, Szechwan Province, China).

Diagnosis: Upper parts Chaetura Drab (Ridgway), the crown somewhat deeper in colour and, like the remiges and rectrices, lightly glossed with steel blue or green; the rump (in unworn specimens) greyish brown, only slightly differentiated from the mantle ; tarsi densely feathered; wing length 132–141 mm. (15 specimens).

Range: Breeding in central and south-western China (Hupeh and Szechwan Provinces); in winter found in Tongking, peninsular Thailand (Nakhon Si Thammarat Province), and the Andaman Islands (straggler?)

Remarks: The judgment of Mrs. Hall and Mr. Macdonald in allocation of Hume's name is confirmed by that author's own remarks on *Collocalia innominata* in Stray Feathers, 2 (1, 2 & 3): 160, 1874:. "This species is described, Stray Feathers, 1873, p. 294. We only procured one specimen, and I have nothing to add to what I formerly said in regard to it, except that it is a considerably larger bird than either *unicolor*, Jerdon, of the Nilghiris, or the very closely allied, and barely separable race from the Himalayas, of which also I have numerous examples. In no one of the twenty odd specimens that I possess from the Nilghiris and the Himalayas does the wing exceed 4.73 (120.14 m.m), whereas in *innominata* it is 5.5 inches (139.70 mm.)."

I have not seen the unique type of Thayer and Bang's *capnitis*, but have had the advantage of helpful comments from Dr. Ernst Mayr, who has

kindly examined it for me. In all its main characters — short wing, less well-developed rump band, greater amount of concealed white in the contour feathers, highly green-glossed crown and back — it appears to be a juvenile of the Chinese race of *Collocalia brevirostris*.

2. *Collocalia brevirostris brevirostris* (McClelland).

Hirundo brevirostris McClelland, Quart, Journ. Calcutta Medical & Physical Soc., 1 (3): 322, July 1837 (Assam). *Nomen nudum* !
Hirunda brevirostris McClelland, Proc. Zoöl. Soc. London, 7 (82): 155, March 1840 (Assam).

Diagnosis: Separable from the preceding race by having the rump brownish grey (rather than greyish brown) and thus markedly differentiated from the mantle, and by having the wing length 123–132mm. (13 specimens).

Range: Breeding in southern Tibet, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Assam, Manipur and northern Burma.

Remarks: Five adults from Myitkyina, north-eastern Burma (not included among the 13 mentioned just above), show different degrees of tarsal feathering, some having the tarsi but sparsely feathered and thus approximating members of more southern populations; their wing length, 128–132 mm., places them with nominate *brevirostris*.

3. *Collocalia brevirostris rogersi*, subsp. nov.

Type: U.S. National Museum No. 450071, adult male, collected at Ban Hin Laem (lat. 14°40′ N., long. 98°40′ E.), Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand, on 20th November, 1952, by H. G. Deignan ; collector's number 218.

Diagnosis: Separable from the two preceding races by having the tarsi *naked*, and by having the wing length 116–128 mm. (19 specimens).

Range: Breeding in the Southern Shan States, north-western Tongking, northern Laos, northern and western Thailand south to Kanchanaburi Province (everywhere associated with limestone crags) ; in winter found in peninsular Thailand (Prachuap Khiri Khan and Surat Thani Provinces) and Malaya (Selangor State).

Remarks: Twelve adults from the Southern Shan States, Tongking, Laos, and north-western Thailand (not included among the 19 mentioned just above), show different degrees of tarsal feathering, some having the tarsi lightly feathered and thus approximating members of more northern populations ; their wing length, 118–129 mm., places them with *rogersi*. Three winter-taken adults from Selangor, with wing length 120–129 m.m, similarly have the tarsi lightly feathered, and accordingly seem to represent migrants of this more northern, atypical population of *rogersi*.
The new form is named for my friend Charles Henry Rogers, Curator of the Princeton Museum of Zoology, Princeton, New Jersey.

National Wildfowl Counts

The following is an account of the most interesting talk given to the Club at its October meeting

by Mr. George Atkinson Willes

The National Wildfowl Count scheme was started in 1948 under the aegis of the British Wildfowl Inquiry Committee, and rapidly expanded.

In 1954 the work was handed over to the Wildfowl Trust, which is making a determined effort to extend still further the scope of this investigation.

Participants in the scheme, all of them volunteers, are asked to record the numbers of each species of wildfowl on certain sample waters at regular monthly intervals between August and April. The counts are made on the same dates throughout the country to avoid, as far as possible, any duplication of records. Last season in Great Britain regular monthly counts were made on over 500 waters and occasional observations were made on a further 200 waters. Over the past seven seasons nearly 25,000 completed count forms have been received from 1,100 places. Some of these showed only negative results and counting on them has been abandoned.

It may be said with justification that 500 regular count points provide a very small sample of the thousands of stretches of standing water and other possible wildfowl habitat in the country, It seems however that although the sample of waters covered may represent no more than 1 % of the total acreage of habitat available, the sample of wildfowl counted may represent a very much higher percentage of the total population. Many of the large concentrations of wildfowl are included in the sample of waters counted, and many areas, mainly in Scotland and Wales, are known to be ecologically incapable of supporting large populations. Occasional visits to as many small waters as possible are encouraged to provide a measure of the size of the population sample and to ensure that the status of wildfowl on them is not changing radically.

During the 1954/55 season some 200,000 ducks were counted on the peak date in January. Of these 160,000 were dabbling ducks, 20,000 diving ducks, and 20,000 Shelducks. The number of Wigeon observed, the largest total for an individual species, was about 80,000. These figures give an idea of the present scope of the investigation. By themselves they provide no more than an interesting basis for speculation on the possible size of the total populations of various species in this country, and it must be stressed that the counts were never designed to produce a complete census of wildfowl.

Their primary aim is, and always has been, to endeavour to detect trends in the status of wildfowl wintering in Great Britain. To achieve this the monthly totals of each species of wildfowl on various groups of waters in one year are compared with similar totals from identical groups in subsequent years. By this means a direct comparison is available year by year, but as, over a limited period, any trend, short of catastrophe, is liable to be wholly or partially masked by fluctuations in population due to weather conditions, this must be regarded as a long term study. So far only the totals for Mallard counted on 228 inland and 98 coastal areas during the seasons 51/52, 52/53 and 53/54 are available for comparison. They show a late November or early December peak of 44,496, 44,094 and 39,836 respectively.

More readily available are the patterns of seasonal fluctuations in population which vary considerably in different parts of the country. These regional variations suggest that the main centres of population of some species may shift at certain periods of the year. It is hoped that the ringing data may help to relate increases in population in one area with corresponding decreases in another.

Collaterally with the counts the Wildfowl Trust is planning a research into wildfowl habitats and the compilation of a register of waters. This register, known as Operation Waterlog, will include details of the factors which make one water more attractive to wildfowl than another, and will have a direct application on habitat improvement. Its most important use, however, may prove to be the assessment of the size of the sample of waters covered by the wildfowl counts and of the percentage of birds counted.

Finally it should be mentioned that the Wildfowl Trust is by no means complacent about the present extent of the cover of the Wildfowl Counts, and is constantly trying to recruit new observers, either for regular or occasional counts. Volunteers are asked to write to The Wildfowl Trust, Slimbridge, Gloucester.

Further Comments on Teal Variations

by Dr. Jeffery G. Harrison

Received 8th June, 1955.

The European Teal, *Anas crecca crecca* Linnaeus, is a species of duck which appears particularly liable to produce variations in plumage pattern and colouration. These have recently been the subject of a number of notes in the Bulletin ([1], [2], [3]) and my father has described how a number of these varieties have tended to reproduce characteristics resembling those found in other species of duck. This phenomenon in the absence of hybridisation, he has termed autophoric reverse mutation.

It seems that a large percentage of such variants may have significance in this respect, the exceptions being those presenting with albinism or melanism. One variety of Teal described, did not appear to have any particular meaning at the time, but a possible explanation has since come to my notice. This bird was an adult duck which I shot on the Medway Estuary in Kent on 11th October 1952 and which has been mentioned in the "Birds of Kent" ([4]). This specimen was peculiar in having dull green metallic reflections on the wing coverts. A number of duck Teal, including this one show dull purple metallic reflections on the scapulars, but this is the only one I know of with green reflections on the wing coverts.

During the spring I received from Mr. Peter Scott an adult duck of the Auckland Island Flightless Teal, *Nesonetta aucklandica* G. R. Gray, to be preserved for the Wildfowl Trust collection. As soon as I saw this specimen I was struck by the fact that here was a species with exactly the same metallic green reflections, occurring not only on the wing coverts, but also on the rump and mantle, and it seemed likely that this was a species providing a link to the abnormal green reflections on the wing coverts of the Teal.

The Auckland Island Flightless Teal represents a monotypic genus, *Nesonetta*, which Peters ([5]) has placed between the genera *Tadora* and *Anas*, but in this case the aberrant Teal indicates an affinity of *Nesonetta* towards *Anas*.

A further variety of Teal falls into a different category. This is an adult drake in eclipse plumage, which I shot at the mouth of the Krückau river

on the Elbe Estuary, Germany, on 15th August, 1950. This bird is quite distinct from all other eclipse drakes I have examined in having a well marked chestnut colour beneath the chin and extending down the neck and onto the cheeks. On the lateral under-tail coverts on each side there is a line of paler yellowish-brown. These two patches of colour occur in the same distribution as similar markings in the adult drake, but in the latter they are much stronger and darker. The explanation of this variety would appear to be due to an excess of male hormone or a prolongation of its effect at the time of assumption of eclipse plumage. This specimen is in my collection.

It would seem that variants in plumage in wildfowl fall into three classes:— *a*. those in which there is evolutionary significance—i.e. in species, autophoric reverse mutation; in hybrids, heterophoric reverse mutation.

b. those in which the variation can be related to hormonal factors, of which the eclipse drake Teal described here is an example. In this connection, the role of the thyroid has to be studied, but melanism may be linked with this gland.

c. those in which the changes are albinistic or isabelline, varieties of which occur not infrequently in the Mallard, *Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos* Linnaeus, and may be the result of inbreeding, as mentioned by Sage ([6]).

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5. J. L. Peters. "Check-List of Birds of the World", Vol. 1., 1931.
6. Bryan L. Sage. "Some futher notes on Plumage Variations in the Mallard, *Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos* Linnaeus". Bull. B.O.C. Vol. 75, pp. 54–57, 1955.

A case of Nodular Taeniasis due to *Filicollis anatis* in an Eider Duck *Somateria mollissima mollissima* (Linnaeus)

by Dr. James M. Harrison

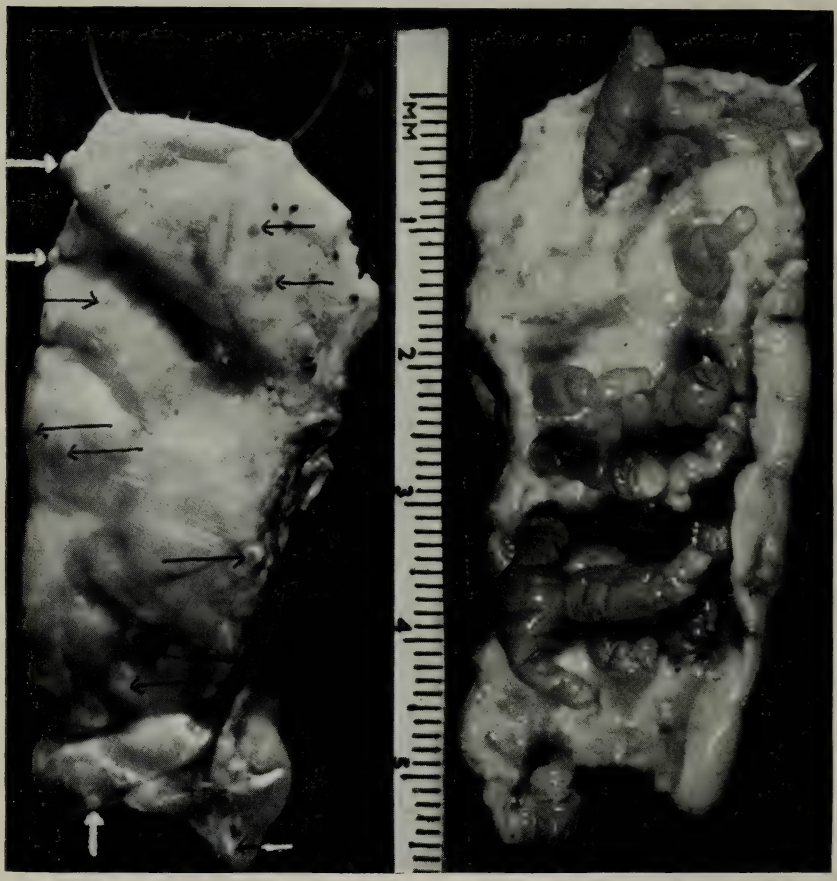
Received 8th July, 1955

Cases of nodular taeniasis in ducks are not unusual and various species of the group *Acanthocephala*, popularly known as the Thorn-headed or Spiny-headed worms are involved.

The condition gets its name on account of the small tuberescences which are visible on the serous or external surface of the intestines of infected subjects.

Recently Thom and Garden [1] (1955) have described an outbreak of this disease amongst Eider Ducks in Aberdeendshire, on the banks of the estuary of the Ythan, where a number, mostly first-year ♀ were found dead. An investigation revealed that the parasite responsible was *Polymorphus boschadis* (Schrank 1788).

The present case occurred in an immature drake Eider Duck, *Somateria mollissima mollissima* (Linnaeus) obtained by Dr. Jeffery G. Harrison at Glimsholm, Orkney on 23rd May, 1955. When the specimen was received by me there was nothing to indicate that it was in any way pathological. However on autopsy the typical lesions of nodular taeniasis were found (Plate I). The infestation was located in most of the terminal ileum. On



INTESTINE OF EIDER DRAKE SHOWING, ON LEFT LESIONS ON SEROUS SURFACE, AND ON RIGHT, *Filicollis anatis* (Shrank, 1788) IN SITU.

Arrows indicate the typical appearances of nodular taeniasis due to implantation of head of parasite into mucosa of intestine.

opening the gut (Plate II), large numbers of acanthocephalic worms of a striking yellow-orange colour were seen, while the bowel was very oedematous. The parasites were most difficult to disengage from their attachments to the bowel wall.

Specimens of this parasite were submitted to Mr. S. Prudhoe of the British Museum (Natural History), South Kensington, and were identified as *Filicollis anatis* (Schrank 1788). Mr. Prudhoe sent me (*in litt*,) the

following information:— "*Filicollis anatis* is universally regarded as a species quite distinct from *Polymorphus boschadis*. Its intermediate host is said to be the fresh-water crayfish (*Astacus*), but probably the water-louse (*Asellus*) and fresh-water shrimps (*Gammarus* etc) are also capable of acting as intermediate hosts". Thom and Garden (*loc. cit.*) mention crayfish and *Gammarus pulex* as the intermediaries in the case of *Polymorphus boschadis*.

Dr. Keith Randall, Consulting Pathologist, has kindly examined the gut and has reported as follows on the histological picture:—

"There is a considerable enteritis, presumably induced by the presence of the worms in the colon of this duck. Also a fibrous walled cyst is seen involving the submucosa and muscularis—this may be due to reaction following the presence of a further parasite a little lower in the gut. Many double-spined ova are seen, mostly within the gut of the worm. (These are very similar to the ova of *Trichiuris trichura* and unlike the Hookworm ova".)

The following *Acanthocephala* are listed by Niethammer [2] (1938) for *Somateria mollissima mollissima—Filicollis anatis*, *Polymorphus minutus*, *P. phippsi*, *Profilicollis botulus*. Mr. Prudhoe advises me (*in litt.*) that *Polymorphus boschadis* (Schrank 1788) is regarded as a synonym of *P. minutus* (Goeze, 1782). *P. phippsi* Kostylew, 1922, it has been suggested by Van Cleve and Rausch, [3] (1951), is possibly also a synonym of *P. minutus*.

I am indebted to Mr. Prudhoe for the identification of the parasites and for his comments upon the taxonomy of the group, and to Dr. Randall for arranging for his Staff to prepare the sections of the gut, and to Mr. E. G. Poynter for the photographs of the specimens.

1. Thom, V. M. and Garden, E. A., 1955, *Fair Isle Bird Observ. Bull.*, 2. 7. 325.
2. Niethammer, G., 1938, *Handb. Deutsch. Vogelk.*, 11, 516.
3. Van Cleve and Rausch, *Proc. Helminth. Soc.* Washington, 1951, XVIII, pp. 81–84.

On the Validity of *Prodotiscus regulus adustoides* Clancey, 1952: Pietermaritzburg, Natal

by Mr. P. A. Clancey

Received 4th July, 1955

Friedmann "Annales du Musée du Congo Belge", in-4°, Zool., 1. 1954, pp. 21–27, casts doubt on the validity of the recently described race of Wahlberg's Honey-guide *Prodotiscus regulus adustoides* Clancey (*vide* "Durban Museum Novitates", vol. iv, 1, 1952, p. 9), stating that "the recently proposed *adustoides* Clancey requires corroboration before it can be accepted . . . but the characters given for this race seem slight and possibly a matter of post-mortem change".

In my paper on the South Africa races of *P. regulus* I recognised two subspecies, a dark one (*P.r. adustoides*) confined to the southern areas of high rainfall and considerable humidity (eastern Cape, Natal and Zululand), and a rather lighter coloured one (*P.r. regulus*) with much paler ear-coverts and a whiter throat from the drier interior of the sub-continent

(Bechuanaland, the Transvaal, Southern Rhodesia, etc.) northwards to Kenya Colony, Abyssinia and the Cameroons. The findings given in my report were based on what was probably the most comprehensive material of the South African populations ever brought together of this uncommon honey-guide, the specimens being drawn from the Transvaal and Natal Museum collections. Topotypical material of *P.r. regulus* Sundevall, 1850:

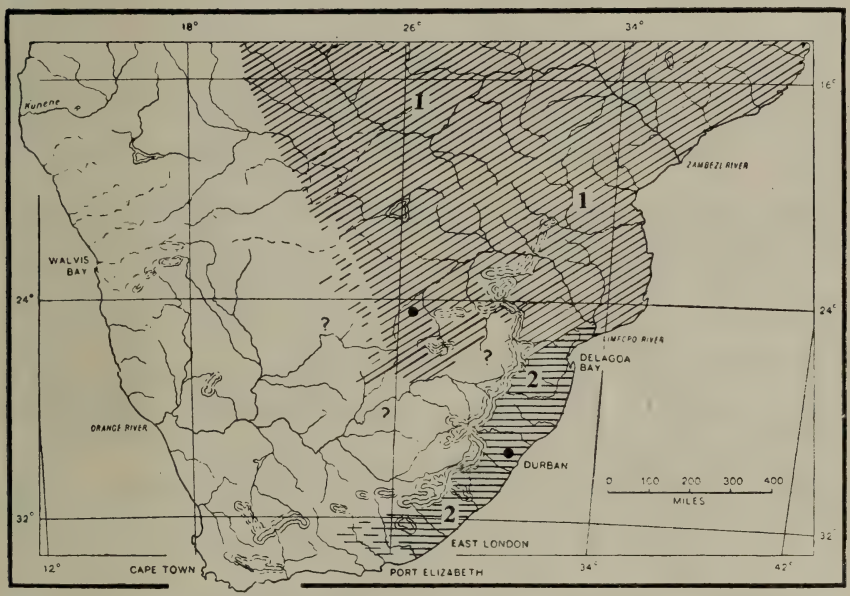
Dorsal surfaces of specimens of the two recognisable races of *Prodotiscus regulus* Sundevall.

1. *P. r. regulus* Sundevall: Specimens from Southern Rhodesia.
2. *P. r. adustoides* Clancey: Specimens from Natal and the eastern Cape Province.

The specimens shown in the above photograph were collected during the years 1950-1955. The very dark upper-parts of *P. r. adustoides* should be observed.

Mohapoani, Witfontein Mountains, western Transvaal, is generally scarce in collections, and I was only able to study one specimen from Bechuanaland and three from the Transvaal in 1952. In view of the doubts on the validity of my *P.r. adustoides* recently expressed by Dr. Friedmann, I have investigated afresh the whole question of geographical variation in the South African populations of this honey-guide using only recent material. Through the great kindness of Mr. R. H. N. Smithers, Director of the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia, Bulawayo, I have had the use of no less than five specimens of *P.r. regulus* from south-western Southern Rhodesia obtained during the years 1952, 1954 and 1955. Specimens collected in south-western Southern Rhodesia can be considered for

all practical purposes to be the same as topotypes, coming as they do from a somewhat similar and contiguous area to the type-locality, which is likewise on the eastern periphery of the Kalahari. Of *P.r. adustoides* I have had the use of the paratypical series taken in 1951 and a single specimen obtained in November, 1950, all from Natal and in the Natal Museum collection, and in addition two specimens taken in the eastern Cape Province in 1953 and 1954 from the collections of the Durban and East London Museums — a series of seven specimens in all.



Map of the southern part of Africa showing the disposition of the ranges of the resident races of *Prodotiscus regulus* Sundevall.

1. *P. r. regulus* Sundevall. 2. *P. r. adustoides* Clancey.

● marks the type localities of the two races.

There would appear to be no justification for the suggestion that the differences claimed for *P.r. adustoides* are the outcome of comparing recent specimens with those affected by post-mortem cabinet colour change, because material of *P.r. regulus* in the Durban Museum taken by Percival in the eastern Transvaal in the 1890's is only slightly redder and less olive dorsally than the recent material of this race from Southern Rhodesia before me. Viewed in series *P.r. adustoides* is decidedly darker on the upperparts than *P.r. regulus*. Using the colour nomenclature of Villalobos, "Colour Atlas", 1947, the mantles of four adults (including the *Type*) of *P.r. adustoides* give the following readings: SO–6–1°; SO–5–1°; SO–5–1°; SO–4–1°, while two adults and two first year birds of *P.r. regulus* read as follows: OOS–7–2°; OOS–6–2°; OOS–6–2°; OOS–6–2°. On the ventral surfaces *P.r. adustoides* differs from the nominate race in having the throat dusky and concolorous with the breast and flanks and not dull white as in *P.r. regulus*. In this connection it should be noted that specimens of

P.r. regulus in juvenal plumage have the throat dusky, and in this plumage the two races are not separable on the gular character. In addition to these differences, the wings, tail and ear-coverts of *P.r. adustoides* are markedly darker than in *P.r. regulus*. The examination of the very fresh topotypical and near topotypical material of the two races here discussed confirms the distinctness of *P.r. adustoides* on the characters given in the original description, and the race is deserving of recognition.

The nomenclature and ranges of the two recognisable races of Wahlberg's Honey-guide can be defined as follows:

1. *Prodotiscus regulus regulus* Sundevall.

Prodotiscus regulus Sundevall "Ofvers. K. Sv. Vet. Förhandl.", vii, No. 4, 1850, p. 109: Lower and Upper Caffraria. *Type* from Mohapoani, Witfontein Mountains, western Transvaal, South Africa.

Type: In the Naturhistoriska Riksmuseum, Stockholm. Cat. No. 7422.

Range: Bechuanaland, the Transvaal, most of southern Portuguese East Africa and Southern Rhodesia northwards in the east to the eastern Congo, Tanganyika Territory, Kenya Colony and Abyssinia, and in the west through Angola to French Equatorial Africa and the Cameroons.

2. *Prodotiscus regulus adustoides* Clancey.

Prodotiscus regulus adustoides Clancey, "Durban Museum Novitates", vol. iv., 1, 1952, p. 9: Ashburton, near Pietermaritzburg, Natal, South Africa.

Type: In the Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg, Natal.

Range: In the eastern Cape Province from about Grahamstown to Pondoland and East Griqualand, and throughout Natal and Zululand and the extreme south of southern Portuguese East Africa.

A New Race of *Cisticola aridula* Witherby from South-Eastern Africa

by Mr. P. A. Clancey

Received 4th July, 1955

Roberts "Birds of South Africa", 1940, p. 264, places the dark-coloured south-east African populations of *Cisticola aridula* Witherby as the race *C.a. lobito* Lynes, 1930: Lobito Bay, Angola, but Vincent, "Check List of the Birds of South Africa", 1952, p. 83, unites all the South African populations under the name *C.a. kalahari* O. Grant, 1910: Molopo River, Bechuanaland, stating that *C.a. lobita* is an extra-limital race. Through the kindness of Dr. G. Rudebeck, Ornithologist of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria, I have been able to examine critically much of the material used by the late Dr. Roberts, a series of thirty-three specimens in all, and find that Roberts' arrangement of the South African sub-continental populations into two geographical races was fully justified, though his use of the name *C.a. lobito* for the south-east African race was almost certainly incorrect.

The populations of *C. aridula* resident in Natal, Zululand, southern Portuguese East Africa, Swaziland and adjacent regions, are in fresh non-breeding plumage, and even in well-worn breeding dress, significantly darker and more heavily striated on the upper-parts and rather more richly coloured throughout than specimens of *C.a. kalahari* from the dry parts of the western Transvaal, south-western Southern Rhodesia, Bechuanaland, Ovamboland and Damaraland. *C.a. kalahari* as here understood is a race composed of several rather variable populations. Those of Ovamboland and Ngamiland are very pale dorsally, with the rump colouration dull, whereas the populations from the south-eastern limits of the range of the race are rather warmer, more pinkish sandy, particularly on the rump. Damaraland birds are, judging by two skins from Neudamm, Windhoek, more yellowish dorsally than examples of either the Ovamboland or south-eastern populations of the race. Unfortunately the freshly moulted material available at the present time is insufficient for a study of these comparatively minor differences to be undertaken.

It is not clear on what grounds Roberts ascribed the darkly coloured populations of south-eastern Africa to *C.a. lobito*, a race described from the west coast of the continent. No material of *C.a. lobito* is available in South African collections, but of this race Chapin, "Birds of the Belgian Congo," vol. iii, 1953, p. 392, writes: . . ."*Cisticola aridula lobito* Lynes is slightly lighter in colour (than *C.a. tanganyika*) and apparently restricted to the coast of Angola." *C.a. perplexa* White, 1947: Chambezi Valley, north-eastern Northern Rhodesia, of Northern Rhodesia, parts of Angola, ? and the southern Congo, is another race which is closely allied to *C.a. tanganyika*, differing only in the breeding dress, which is darker. *C.a. tanganyika* Lynes, 1930, of East Africa (type-locality: Morogoro) differs from the two southern African races in being more boldly striated with black on the upper-parts.

In view of these findings it would seem desirable to propose a new racial name for the populations resident in Natal, Zululand, southern Portuguese East Africa, Swaziland and adjacent regions, and in recognition of its dark colouration when compared with the more widely distributed of the two South African forms, *C.a. kalahari*, I propose to designate it

Cisticola aridula caligina, subsp. nov.

Type: ♀ adult. Breeding. Maputa, north-eastern Zululand, South Africa. 14th November, 1929. Collected by Dr. Austin Roberts. In the collection of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria, T.M.15243.

Description: Nearest to *C.a. kalahari* of the interior and western deserts and associated arid regions of southern Africa, but differs in being darker and rather redder dorsally in both breeding and non-breeding dresses, and with the feather centres darker and rather broader (almost as dark as *Cisticola eximia eximia* (Heuglin), but rump not rufous). Wings and tail darker. Similar in size.

Measurements of the Type: Wing (flattened) 46.5, culmen from base 12.5, tarsus 19, tail 33 + mm.

Range: Parts of Natal (Estcourt, Weenen, etc.), Zululand (Hluhluwe, Manaba, Maputa), Swaziland, southern Portuguese East Africa, eastern

districts of the Transvaal, and the high rainfall areas of Mashonaland, Southern Rhodesia (Inyanga). Intergrades with *C.a. kalahari* to the west of its stated range.

The Races of the Red-capped Babbler, *Timalia pileata* Horsfield

by Mr. H. G. Deignan

Received 16th August, 1955.

The red-capped babbler, *Timalia pileata*, ranges at low elevations from Nepal to south-eastern China and southward over the Indo-Chinese peninsula, with an isolated population in Java. It is almost restricted to areas covered with tall grasses ; this causes its distribution to be discontinuous, and the destruction of such grass stands to make room for rice, tobacco, etc., is probably in many areas leading to extirpation of the species.

Through the courtesy of the authorities of the Museum of Comparative Zoology (Cambridge, Mass.), the American Museum of Natural History (New York), the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, and the Chicago Natural History Museum, I have added to the material available in Washington to make a total of 120 specimens seen. These have shown that, in addition to the four generally accepted races, two well-marked new ones may be established.

The several forms are all readily separable by their varying colour tones above and below, but it is essential that comparison be made with recently collected, fresh-plumaged adults, inasmuch as immatures are, above and below, more rufescent than their elders, old skins are subject to "foxing", and birds in worn dress are abraded into plumages that approximate those of the next paler race. With the observation that a given population does not necessarily most nearly resemble those geographically nearest it, I accept the following forms:

1. *Timalia pileata bengalensis* Godwin-Austen.

   Timalia Bengalensis Godwin-Austen, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Bengal, 41 (2) 2: 143, June 25th, 1872 ((India); type specimen from the Khasi Hills, Assam, *fide* Kinnear, Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, 45: 9, 1924).

   Timalia Jerdoni Walden, Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., (4) 10 (4): 61, July, 1872 (Khasi Hills, Assam State, India).

   Timalia pileata arundicola Koelz, Journ. Zoöl. Soc. India 4 (2): (153), Apr. 1953 (Karong, Manipur, India).

   Diagnosis: Mantle dark olivaceous brown, but slightly suffused with rufescent; upper surface of tail blackish brown, set off from the remaining upper parts; posterior under parts pale buff, washed with olivaceous.

   Range: Nepal ; Bhutan; Assam; Bengal; Burma (Upper Chindwin, Arakan).

2. *Timalia pileata intermedia* Kinnear.

   Timalia pileata intermedia Kinnear, Bull, Brit. Orn. Club, 45 (290): 9, October 29th, 1924. New name for *Timalia pileata jerdoni* Walden"

Stuart Baker, Fauna of British India, Birds, ed. 2, 1: 227, 1922 (Pegu), not *Timalia Jerdoni* Walden, 1872.

Diagnosis: Mantle rufescent brown, much lighter than that of *bengalensis*; upper surface of tail dark brown, lightly suffused with rufescent; posterior under parts vivid rufescent buff.

Range: Burma (Magwe, Pegu, Tenasserim south to Amherst District); Thailand (Kanchanaburi Province).

3. *Timalia pileata patriciae*, subsp. nov.

Type: U.S. National Museum No. 450627, adult male (testes slightly enlarged), collected at Ban Khlong Khlung (lat. 16°10′ N., long. 99°45′ E.), Kamphaeng Phet Province, Thailand, on 19th April, 1953, by H. G. Deignan ; collector's number 1622.

Diagnosis: Mantle light olivaceous brown, but slightly suffused with rufescent (thus as cold as in *bengalensis*, but much paler); upper surface of tail dark brown, without rufescent tinge; posterior under parts light rufescent buff.

Range: Thailand (the western central plains from Kamphaeng Phet to Prachuap Khiri Khan).

Remarks: The race is named in honour of Mrs. B. P. Hall of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.).

4. *Timalia pileata pileata* Horsfield.

Timalia pileata Horsfield, Trans. Linn. Soc. London, 13 (1): 151, May, 1821 (Java).

Diagnosis: Mantle pale olivaceous brown, lightly suffused with rufescent; upper surface of tail dark brown, lightly suffused with rufescent; posterior under parts pale creamy buff.

Range: Java.

5. *Timalia pileata smithi*, subsp. nov.

Type: U.S. National Museum No. 450626, adult male, collected at Chiang Saen Kao (lat. 20°15′ N., long 100°05′ E.), Chiang Rai Province, Thailand, on 22nd February, 1953, by H. G. Deignan; collector's number 1257.

Diagnosis: Mantle deep rufescent brown (darker and warmer than in any other race); upper surface of tail dark brown, suffused with rufescent; posterior under parts deep rufescent buff (darker and warmer than in any other race).

Range: Burma (Myitkyina, Northern and Southern Shan States); Yunnan; Tongking, northern Laos; northern Thailand.

Remarks: The race is named in honour of Dr. Harry Madison Smith, who has sent me valuable collections from Central Burma and Arakan.

6. *Timalia pileata dictator* Kinnear.

Timelia (*sic*) *pileata dictator* Kinnear, Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, 50 (339): 55, 5th March, 1930 (Dran (lat. 11°49′ N., long. 108°38′ E.), Haut-Donai Province, Annam).

Diagnosis: Mantle rufescent brown, much lighter than that of *smithi* (nearest that of *intermedia*, but a shade paler and more olivaceous); upper surface of tail dark brown, lightly suffused with rufescent; posterior

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under parts light rufescent buff (nearest the colour shown by *patriciae*).

Range: Eastern and south-eastern Thailand; southern Laos; Cambodia ; southern Annam; Cochin-China.

New Races of Birds from Eastern Asia

by Mr. H. G. Deignan

Received 16th August, 1955.

A Chinese population of a tree-pie and the Indo-Chinese population of a bulbul, each apparently wholly isolated from others of their respective species, seem worthy of racial recognition. The first may be called:

Crypsirina formosae sapiens, subsp. nov.

Type: U.S. National Museum No. 297970, adult male, collected on Omei-shan (at elev. 4,000 ft.), Szechwan Province, China, on 29th August, 1923, by David C. Graham.

Diagnosis: Separable from all forms of the species except *sinica* (Fukien) and "*schistacea*" (Kwangsi) by having the exposed portions of the central rectrices entirely black. From 13 specimens of *sinica* seen from Chekiang (6) and Fukien (7), seven Szechwan birds differ in having the crown, nape, and upper back a deeper grey, the remainder of the mantle a much deeper brown, and the under parts everywhere a much deeper grey.

Range: Szechwan Province (Omei-shan, Yaan).

Remarks: Cr. f. schistacea, named from two specimens, was separated by Stresemann (Orn. Monatsb., 37 (5): 139, Sept. 1, 1929) as having the under parts purer grey, less washed with brownish, than *Cr. f. sinica*. This character is, I think, an individual one, without geographical significance.

The second will be named

Pycnonotus goiavier jambu, subsp. nov.

Type: U.S. National Museum No. 278436, adult male, collected at "Tachin"=Ban Maha Chai (lat. 13°30′ N., long. 100°15′ E.), Samut Sakhon Province, Thailand, on 23rd October, 1916, by Cecil Boden Kloss.

Diagnosis: In unworn adult plumage easily separable from *P. g. personatus* of northern Sumatra and the southern two-thirds of the Malay Peninsula by having the entire upper parts much more richly suffused with ferruginous, the centre of the abdomen rather more sullied with brownish, and the under tail coverts a deper yellow.

Range: Thailand (the coastal provinces from Samut Songkhram to Trat); Cambodia; Cochin-China.

Remarks: No specimen of this dooryard species has ever been reported from the northern third of the Malay Peninsula; there is thus a hiatus of 200 miles between the ranges of *P. g. personatus* and *P. g. jambu*.

As subspecific name I have chosen the Malayan substantive for the guava, in allusion to this bulbul's specific and English vernacular names.

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DINNERS AND MEETINGS FOR 1955

13th December.

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